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*Front.*

Fanny conducts Hope to the Drawing Room.

P. 64.







HOPE CAMPBELL  
OR  
KNOW THYSELF  
BY  
CATHERINE D. BELL.



LONDON.  
FREDERICK WARNE & CO.



*Front.* Fanny conducts Hope to the Drawing Room. P. 64.





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# HOPE CAMPBELL;

OR,

## KNOW THYSELF.

BY

CATHERINE D. BELL,

AUTHOR OF "ROSA'S WISH," "ALLEN AND HARRY," ETC., ETC.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.



LONDON:  
FREDERICK WARNE & CO.,  
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## PREFACE.

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THIS Tale is intended to inculcate a most important truth—the necessity, and the very frequent want of self-knowledge. Those who would not suffer as Hope Campbell did, must beware of making self an idol, and strive to obey the injunction of Holy Scripture,—  
“Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.”





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# HOPE CAMPBELL.

## CHAPTER I.

### HOPE'S THEORIES.



ELL, that is the last question I wish to ask ; and really it is more than time that I should say so. I have been here at least two hours, and I am afraid you must be quite worn out."

Thus Mrs. Markham, the rector's wife, addressed Mrs. Denham, the rich Lady Bountiful of the parish, at the conclusion of a conversation which had, as she said, lasted two hours, and during which the circumstances and necessities of nearly every poor family in the neighbourhood had been entered into, and the best plans for their relief discussed.

The scene of the interview was the library at Denham Park,—a noble room, whose furniture, paintings, hangings, and decorations of every kind, bore the impress of the exquisite taste, even more than of the ample wealth of its proprietress, an impress equally stamped upon her dress and personal ornaments. These were very simple and unpretending, it is true, but there was that due

regard to the becoming and suitable in the choice of colour, form, and material, which one often misses even in the dress of those who bestow far more attention to the subject than ever Mrs. Denham did.

The feebleness and languor expressed by that lady's whole figure and attitude as she lay back in the large easy-chair, the delicate flush on her wasted cheek, and the feverish light in her eye, were only too true indications of a failing state of health. She looked, indeed, incapable of bearing fatigue or exertion of any kind, but she roused herself to answer Mrs. Markham with great earnestness.

She was not at all fatigued, she said, it was the greatest possible pleasure to hear all about her poor dependants. She had given Dr. Markham a *carte blanche* as to the money he might find it necessary to expend upon them during her absence. And she had perfect confidence in his and Mrs. Markham's kindness, attention, and wisdom. But still she liked to know all about every family, and to be able, while far away from them all, to fancy what each was about, and how each was prospering.

"Still," pursued Mrs. Markham, "I am afraid that Dr. Boyd will think I have stayed far longer than I ought to have done. And I am sure I have stayed far longer than I meant to do. Three o'clock struck at least ten minutes ago, and I had appointed to meet Lucy at Rose Lane at half-past two.

"By the bye, she ought to have been here by this time," she added; "I told her to come on if I did not meet her. I suppose she has met Hope somewhere

about the grounds, and they will be wandering about chatting, and quite forgetting me."

"She is certainly not with Hope," Mrs. Denham answered, directing the eyes of her visitor to a window at the further end of the room, where a young girl sat reading. "Hope, my dear," raising her voice, "have you seen Lucy Markham to-day?"

But Hope was too deeply engrossed in her studies to hear the question, and for a moment or two Mrs. Denham was too much absorbed in gazing with fond admiration upon this darling of her heart to repeat it.

All Hope's attitudes and movements were full of a quiet simple grace. And now as she sat, leaning back upon the low window seat, her book supported upon her open hands, her small well-shaped head a little bent down so as to show to full advantage its perfect setting upon the delicate throat, and the fine fall of the neck and shoulders, and with an expression of deep attention and thoughtfulness on her intelligent, speaking face, she formed a picture which a far more impartial observer than Mrs. Denham might have admired.

As that lady withdrew her eyes with a long-drawn sigh of mingled pain and pleasure, she met those of Mrs. Markham, which had been similarly occupied with her own.

"Certainly she is a pretty creature," Mrs. Markham said, smiling, in answer to the appealing look; "but far too deeply occupied to be able to attend to us. However, there is Lucy to answer for herself," she added, as the figure of a young girl was seen coming



up the steps of the broad stone balcony upon which the windows of the library opened.

"Hope, my love, there is your friend Lucy," Mrs. Denham said in a still louder key ; but again her words were unheard, and the first intimation Hope received of her friend's presence was the darkening of the window at which she sat, as Lucy stood before it.

She looked up, and then with an exclamation of pleasure rose hastily to give her admittance. As she stood undoing the fastenings of the window, she prevented Lucy from seeing into the room, and in answer to the latter's question of whether her mamma had gone away or not, Hope answered innocently that she never had been there.

A hearty laugh from both ladies caused her to look round, and then leaving Lucy to close the window, she came forward to apologize for her rudeness in not having spoken to Mrs. Markham before.

"I did not hear you come in," she said.

"No, my dear, your whole attention seemed quite engrossed in your book. Neither your mamma nor I could succeed in making you hear us. What is the book in which you are so much interested?"

"It is the new book you sent me last night, Lucy," Hope answered, turning to her, and holding up the volume.

"Oh, Ada Greville," cried Lucy eagerly. "And you like it, Hope? I am sure you must."

"Yes—No ; I don't quite know. I think, on the whole, I have been disappointed in it."

"Disappointed ! Oh, Hope !" and Lucy's accent betrayed a very sufficient share of the same feeling.

"Yes, disappointed," Hope said more decidedly. "It is interesting—very interesting ; but then I am disappointed in the heroine."

"Well, Hope, I think Ada is perfectly delightful,—the most loveable, engaging character I ever read about. She has faults, to be sure, but then that makes her only the more natural."

"But my objection is exactly that she is not natural, not consistent. Why, Lucy, you must acknowledge that the Ada of the latter part of the book can scarcely be recognised for the Ada of the former part."

"Well, but Hope, remember how differently she is situated. Remember how sorely she is tried in the end."

"Tried ! Yes, but still that need not make her so very inconsistent. It is not of the want of perfection either of conduct or character that I complain, but of the absence of those very virtues which we were told she possessed. I should not have objected to her failing in some things, if she had not been made to commit the very faults most opposite to her natural character. Now, mamma, don't you agree with me ? Oh, by the bye, you have not read it. How provoking ! But you have, Mrs. Markham ?"

"No, my dear, I have not. Lucy was impatient to hear your opinion of it, and as I have a good many books in hand just now, I advised her to let you have it first."

"Well, I am sorry that you have not read it. I wished you to judge between us. But I think I can tell you so much as to make you and mamma understand the merits of the case,"—and Hope seated herself on the arm of Mrs. Denham's chair, and began her statement with the air of one who was sure of victory.

"Ada Greville was an orphan, and lived with her grandfather. She was the last of his family, and was of course a great pet. He thought her perfection, admired her every look, word, and action, and made it the business of his life to give her pleasure, and to gratify her every wish.

"And yet she was not spoiled. At that time she was, as Lucy says, a most loveable, engaging creature; clever and sensible, energetic, warm-hearted, and generous, with the sunniest face and sunniest temper in the world,—one who enjoyed to the utmost every pleasure that came in her way, and yet who could bear disappointment and vexation just as if she had never known anything else.

"That is the description of what she was at her grandfather's; but—" and Hope was going on most triumphantly when Lucy interrupted her.

"But, Hope, you are not quite fair. The author does not say that Ada was really so very perfect, but only that so she seemed to be in the eyes of those around her."

"Well, well, but he makes her actions speak for themselves, and that is the character they give her.

Take, for instance, that one trait of being equally able to enjoy pleasure and to bear disappointment.

"Don't you remember the minute description he gives of her exquisite enjoyment of the little excursions to the woods in search of wild plants for her garden?—the pleasure she took in each little incident, how each individual ray of sunlight through the trees, each separate bed of green moss, or patch of primroses, and wood anemones, each tree, the song of each bird, was accepted by her as a new and independent source of happiness?"

"Then, on the other hand, when, through the stupidity, or rather, I think, through the ill-nature, of that tiresome Mrs. Drew, she was disappointed about going to the concert, upon which she had so greatly set her heart, and to which she had so looked forward for weeks. As soon as she found that she could not help herself, she submitted at once with the most perfect pleasantness and cheerfulness, seeming only desirous that her grandfather should not find out how great had been her disappointment, going through the house singing like a bird, and at the very hour when she should have been entering the concert-room, sitting down with a face like a sunbeam to read aloud the newspapers to the old gentleman, the occupation which of all others she most thoroughly disliked.

"Now, mamma, now, Mrs. Markham," in a tone of triumph, "does that not speak a happy temper, a most contented spirit?"

The readiness and cordiality of the assent of both

ladies somewhat daunted Lucy, but she was not yet overcome.

"At that time," she pleaded, "Ada had so many pleasures to fall back upon, so many things to make amends for one disappointment. But afterwards it was so different."

"Her situation was changed for the worse, then?" asked Mrs. Denham.

"Yes," Lucy answered. "At her grandfather's death it was found that the estate was entailed on male heirs, and there was no provision for her."

"And then," Hope broke in eagerly, "her uncle, a half-brother—only a half-brother of her mother's—came forward most generously, took her into his own home, and charged himself with her maintenance, although he was very poor, and had a large family to support. And Ada, instead of being grateful, and trying all she could to help those who were so ready to help her, gave herself up to the gloomiest despondency, grumbling over every little deprivation, accepting every service in the most thankless spirit, and never making the slightest attempt to serve or please others."

"But that was only at first, Hope. And then only think how very great the deprivations were. Remember what luxury and magnificence she had been accustomed to."

"Luxury and magnificence!" Hope repeated with a kind of disdainful impatience. "What have luxury and magnificence to do with happiness? One may be very grateful for the comfort of a luxurious arm-chair

when one has it, or enjoy very thoroughly a drive in a fine carriage when one can get it. But who could think of making one's-self miserable for the want of either the one or the other?"

"Well," Lucy answered meekly, "perhaps I used wrong words. But you know, Hope, poor Ada lost many things besides easy arm-chairs and fine carriages."

"Oh, of course," still impatiently, "I never meant that she ought to have borne the loss of her kind old grandfather as easily as the loss of some of the comforts and luxuries to which she had been accustomed. But that great sorrow ought to have swallowed up the lesser ones; and had she been what she was described to be, it would have so filled her heart as to leave no place for lamentations over the smallness of her room, the ugliness of the carpet, or the scantiness of the bed-hangings."

"But even without going to great griefs, poor Ada had many smaller ones which were *real* ones, whatever you may think. You know how intense was her admiration of her grandfather's fine pictures and statues. You can tell by your own feelings that she must have been sorry to leave them, and never to see anything like them again. You yourself, Hope, you know how you enjoy fine pictures."

"Yes," Hope answered, her eye resting lovingly upon a beautiful Claude while she spoke; "I should despise myself if I could not enjoy such pictures as these. But I should despise myself still more if I could not make myself happy without them. If the

pictures and sculpture of art were taken from me, I should only turn with the more relish to those of nature."

"But then you know, Hope, poor Ada lost the beauties of both art and nature at one blow. From the beautiful country where she had always lived, she went to the dirtiest and ugliest part of a dirty and ugly town."

"Still she had the pure bright sky, she could never lose that," Hope exclaimed energetically, "with its ever-varying tints and aspects, with its lovely soft summer clouds, its fine winter storms, and its glorious stars."

"In a smoky town, do you think the sky would be very pure, or the stars very glorious?" Mrs. Markham remarked quietly.

But Hope did not hear, or did not heed her. She had excited herself with her own eloquence, and went on enthusiastically,—

"And even if all outward beauty were taken from her, there was a world of inward beauty of which nothing could deprive her. We are told how well her mind had been educated, and all its capacities cultivated. We are told how she revelled in the world of books, and how well fitted she was to enjoy and admire all that was high and great in thought and feeling. That was an enjoyment, a happiness of which she had still full possession."

"Well, but that brings me to another source of grief which you have forgotten. The relations with

whom she lived were so unlike her, so uncultivated, so commonplace—”

“But so true, so earnest, so good,” interrupted Hope.

“Yes, but quite unlike her. Not one of them ever cared to open a book, or had a single idea beyond the everyday affairs of life. Now, I cannot help thinking that the more cultivated Ada’s mind was, the more alive would she be to their deficiencies. The better she was fitted to enjoy communion with the wise and great, the more disrelish would she feel for intercourse with such commonplace, illiterate people.”

“No, no, no, Lucy!” Hope exclaimed vehemently; “I am sure you are wrong, quite wrong. You are confounding fastidiousness with refinement. Dr. Markham often reminds us that our great aim in all our reading and study, ought to be the enlargement of our minds, and the purifying and elevating of our feelings. But what can be more opposed to enlargement of mind than that narrow prejudice which can see and admire only one kind of excellence? And what ennobling or elevating effect could all her cultivation have had, if it made her blind to the moral beauty of such earnest, single-hearted unselfishness, as every member of her uncle’s family displayed, however commonplace they might be—if, indeed, one can call such people commonplace. I don’t think one can.”

“And you are right, quite right, my love. Such unselfishness as you describe is among the rarest, as well as the highest qualities of our nature,” was said



with great earnestness by Mrs. Denham, who had been listening with rapt attention and admiration to every word her darling had uttered.

Encouraged by her approbation, Hope went on in an oratorical manner, like one who was both able and bound to instruct her hearers.

“ I have always thought that the truly wise and great must be slow to despise and quick to appreciate—must have ready sympathy and esteem for all that is good and right even in those greatly their inferiors. And I deny that Ada’s relatives were inferior to her in anything except education. The father who, day by day, with steady cheerfulness, went about a most irksome occupation, and sought no comfort or strength in doing it, except the simple conviction that it was his duty ;—the feeble, ailing mother, who went so quietly and earnestly through her weary round of household toil, and bore so courageously up against the depression of spirits which her failing health produced, anxious above all things that her husband and children should never be saddened by her sadness ;—the daughter, whose sole happiness seemed to be in making others happy, whose choice of occupations was always directed by the knowledge or suspicion of what others thought irksome—who, almost uneducated, or at least taught only by the lovingness of a kind and gentle heart, had gained a quickness of perception and a delicate tact which the most highly cultivated lady in the land might well have envied ;—were not each and all of these a hundredfold more deserving of esteem and admiration than their gloomy inmate, who with

proud selfishness held herself aloof from all share in the labours and troubles of those to whose kindness and generosity she was indebted for her daily bread, wrapping herself up in the proud consciousness of her superiority of intellect, a superiority which she owed to superior opportunities and advantages which had been given to her—not made or wrought out by her own exertions ?”

“ Well, Hope, I really don't think she was selfish.”

“ Not selfish, Lucy ! I am surprised at you. Let her tastes and pursuits be as refined and elevated as you please, what was it but selfishness to make their gratification the one only object of her life, and to encourage herself in total indifference to the sorrows, joys, wants, or wishes of all around her ? Not selfish, indeed !”

Lucy confessed herself overcome, but expressed real sorrow to be so, as it would spoil her pleasure in a favourite book. She spoke and felt like one who was compelled to see the defects of a dear friend. For Lucy had the art of thoroughly realizing the fictitious characters she met with in books, and she could not divest herself of the idea, that Ada Greville was a living being whom she had really known and loved. Hope was too well satisfied with her own wisdom to remark poor Lucy's mortified tone, and went on most triumphantly, to shew how inconsistent this selfishness was with Ada's character, as first depicted.

“ She was particularly ready to see and own excellence, particularly willing and skilful in making allowances, and bearing with cross disagreeable tempers. How unnatural then to make her become all at once blind to the goodness of those really good, kind people ! I have

no patience with her. I cannot conceive how any one could act as she did."

Mrs. Markham had taken the book from Hope, and had turned to the title-page ; and she now asked Hope with some significance of manner, whether she had remarked the second title of the book.

"The second title ! No. What second title ? I don't understand what you mean. Oh !" glancing at the place Mrs. Markham pointed out, "Ada Greville, or Self-knowledge. But I don't see what that has to do with my argument. I don't at all judge of Ada by her own account of herself, but by the character the author draws of her. Of course, if I had taken Ada's own account, the title might have helped to shew me the point of the story. But as it is, I don't see that it has anything to do with my objections."

Mrs. Markham said no more ; but Lucy, who was watching her mother's countenance, read there that Hope had neither understood nor answered the full meaning of her remark.

The argument was carried no farther, as Mrs. Markham and Lucy went away almost immediately, leaving Hope master, or rather mistress of the field.

Lucy tried to persuade Hope to keep the book, and finish it, as Ada's amiability revived towards the conclusion. But with a total disregard to Lucy's mortified feelings she refused, saying, that she had spent too much time upon it already, as there was still much to do in preparation for their long journey. So Lucy had to carry away the book and her own disappointment, and make the best of them.

## CHAPTER II.

### MRS. MARKHAM'S FEARS, AND LUCY'S CONFIDENCE.



As we know already, Mrs. Markham had far outstayed the time she had set apart for her visit to the Park, and now she had to walk at a brisk pace in order to reach home in time for an appointment.

Lucy lingered behind, turning over the pages of her book to find the passages Hope had referred to, until a sudden pang of self-reproach at her unsociableness caused her to quicken her steps, and make up to her mother.

At first Mrs. Markham did not gain much by this movement, as Lucy walked by her side for some time without speaking a word. Mrs. Markham glanced at her several times, but seeing the grave thoughtful expression, she did not interrupt her meditations.

At last Lucy caught one of these glances, and smiled in answer.

"Do you think you might as well be alone as with me for your companion, mamma?" she asked.

"I have been thinking that you were very grave, my love, and if I can read your face aright, a little puzzled."

"Yes, mamma, that is it exactly. I am puzzled to find out—I want to understand. Mamma," in a brisker tone, "have you an objection to tell me what you meant when you asked Hope if she had observed the second title? I mean *all* your meaning. I thought, mamma, that you looked sorrowful, and I could not understand why."

Mrs. Markham hesitated for a minute, ere she answered gravely, almost sadly—

"I was thinking, dear Lucy, that perhaps poor Hope might soon be called upon to test the soundness of her own theories, or rather, to prove how far she was capable of putting them in practice."

"But how, mamma? Surely Hope is not going to leave Mrs. Denham? Surely she will never leave Mrs. Denham?"

"No, my dear; but," very sadly, "it seems only too probable that Mrs. Denham must soon leave Hope."

"Leave Hope, mamma? What do you mean? Oh, mamma, you do not, you cannot mean that she is so very ill? You do not think that she is—is—" and a passionate burst of tears finished her sentence.

"My dearest Lucy, my own love," Mrs. Markham said tenderly, "I never should have spoken so abruptly if I had not supposed that you were perfectly aware of the real state of the case. Surely, dear, you must have known that Mrs. Denham's state of health is the cause of their going to Italy?"

"Yes, mamma," Lucy answered, striving hard to check the tears which she saw were giving her mother

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great pain. "I knew that. But I fancied it was only because our spring weather is apt to be very changeable, and is trying for any one who is not quite strong. I thought, and Hope thinks, that Mrs. Denham will get quite strong in the fine climate of Italy, and will come back as well as ever."

"But at any rate, Lucy, you and Hope could not be ignorant of the very alarming nature of Mrs. Denham's illness a few months ago?"

"Oh no, we knew quite well then that she was not expected to recover. Don't you remember that terrible night that Hope and I spent together in the library, when Dr. Boyd said that she could not live till the morning? I remember when Hope was sent out of the room, because her distress agitated Mrs. Denham, and papa brought her down to the library, and sat beside her, and tried to comfort her, but never seemed to think it possible that Mrs. Denham could live.

"But then you know, mamma, she got better from that very night, and never had any relapse. And since she has been able to come down stairs, she has been so cheerful, and looks so nice, and pretty, and young. Even to-day, mamma—you must have thought she looked well to-day, with that pretty colour, and her eyes so clear and bright. Oh, mamma, are you not mistaken about her?"

Mrs. Markham only shook her head. She knew too well what poor Lucy's hopeful symptoms portended.

"Do you think, then, that it is quite certain she cannot recover? Oh, mamma, is there no hope? Must

she really——” Lucy could not bring herself to say the terrible word *die*.

She dashed away the quick rising tears, which hindered her from reading the answer in Mrs. Markham's face, before she could speak it.

“No one can, no one ought to say that there is certainly *no* hope, my love,” Mrs. Markham answered gently. “We have heard of patients who have lived for years after their case had seemed quite as hopeless as hers. But you know that she has had the best advice that money could command, and all the medical men who have seen her agree that her days are numbered. In the warm climate of Italy her life may be prolonged, and she may suffer less pain and uneasiness than if she remained at home. But they have no expectation that anything can save her.”

The latter part of this answer was scarcely heard by Lucy. She had seized upon the comfort conveyed in the beginning. Slight and doubtful as it was, it gave her sanguine spirit a foundation to rest upon, preparatory to a new ascent up the ladder of hope. Yes, an ascent even to the top. For during the few minutes' silence which succeeded these words, she had carried Mrs. Denham to Italy, restored her to health, and brought her back to England in full strength and vigour.

Having thus relieved her mind of this anxiety, it was at leisure to return to the subject of her mother's thoughts about Hope.

“If Mrs. Denham were not to recover, mamma, would Hope go away from this place?” she asked, laying an

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emphasis on the "if," which spoke of her own confidence that it would not come to pass.

"Of course, my love. Mrs. Denham has only a life-interest in Denham Park. At her death it must go back to the heirs of her husband."

"But then Mrs. Denham has another property in this neighbourhood—her father, Mr. Harvey's property—Will that not be Hope's?"

"No, my dear, it is so entailed that Mrs. Denham cannot leave it to whom she pleases. It goes to the descendants of Mr. Harvey's eldest sister. Hope's mother was the child of a younger one."

"Then, mamma, what will become of poor Hope?"

"Nay, my dear, you need not look so dismayed. Hope will always have a home in her father's house, of course," Mrs. Markham answered with a smile.

"Yes, mamma, but then if he is a bad man?"

"A bad man! my dear child; what put such nonsense into your head? Dr. Campbell is a very good man, and most thoroughly respected by every one who knows him."

"Then, is there not something wrong about Mrs. Campbell?"

"No, indeed. I never saw her; but I have seen those who know her intimately and esteem her highly; and from her letters, I should say she must be a particularly pleasant, sensible, right-judging, kind-hearted woman. I cannot think where you have got such notions, Lucy," said Mrs. Markham, looking at her daughter in considerable surprise.

"At least, either one or both of them are vulgar or



uneducated, or something of that kind. They are in some way inferior, I am sure," Lucy said, decidedly.

"Inferior to whom, my dear?"

"To Mrs. Denham, to Hope's mother. They are in an inferior rank of life. Are they not?"

"They are inferior in wealth, I grant, but neither in birth nor education. Both Dr. and Mrs. Campbell are descended from families quite as good, and much more ancient than the Harveys. But tell me, my dear Lucy, who has been giving you so much false information?"

"Oh, no one. I never heard any one speak of them. I only fancied it," Lucy answered, blushing a little at her mother's grave look of inquiry.

"And on what grounds did your fancy build?"

"Oh, upon various grounds. You know neither Dr. nor Mrs. Campbell, nor even Hope's brother, ever come here, and she never goes to see them. Ever since I can remember, there has been a talk every year of their going to Scotland for the purpose, and every year it has been put off, and that for such very slight, often quite foolish reasons, that I fancied Mrs. Denham did not like to go. And so I supposed that there must be something wrong, or at least very disagreeable about them, or she would have taken more pains to manage, that Hope should see and know them."

"You are a quick observer, Lucy," Mrs. Markham said after a pause. "I wish that in this instance I could say you were not a correct one. Mrs. Denham does not like to go to the Campbells; but that is from no fault of theirs."

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"From whose fault then, mamma? Is that a question I ought not to ask?"

"It is a question very difficult to answer, my love. An unfortunate course of events have combined to place the different persons concerned in uncomfortable relations to each other. The person most in fault is perhaps Mrs. Denham. And yet her feelings are so natural, that one can scarcely blame her."

Lucy looked a curiosity she did not think it proper to express.

"Oh," Mrs. Markham said, answering the look with a smile, "there is not the least harm in your being told all I know. You must have heard, I suppose, that Hope's mother was left an orphan while quite an infant?"

"Yes, Hope has often told me about it. And that her uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. Harvey, took her home to their house, and brought her up as their own daughter, treating her in every way as kindly as they did their own child, Mrs. Denham."

"And I really believe loving her almost as tenderly. She never left them even for a single day, until she was eighteen, when she went to Edinburgh to pay a visit of a few months to some relations of her father's. There she met Dr. Campbell. They saw a great deal of each other, became much attached, and before her return home, he had proposed, and she had accepted, upon condition that her uncle gave his consent.

"It was, however, a difficult matter to gain this. Dr. Campbell was a very young man. Although, as I said, he was of a good family, yet it was a family which had

for a generation or two been going down in the world. He had little income to depend upon, except what his profession might yield him, and his best prospect in it was the hope of succeeding the aged practitioner of his native place, in a somewhat retired part of Scotland.

“ Mr. and Mrs. Harvey, not unnaturally, objected to a marriage which threatened to deprive their niece, for some years at any rate, of many of the comforts to which she had been accustomed. And in obedience to their commands she broke it off.

“ She was the gentlest, most loving, timid creature you could fancy. She never dreamed of acting contrary to the wishes of her friends. But she had given her whole heart to her young lover, and from the day she sent off her refusal of his suit, her health and spirits declined daily and rapidly.

“ At first Mr. and Mrs. Harvey were strangely blind to the real state of the case. And when their eyes were at last opened, her state of health was so very alarming as to cause them to hurry to the opposite extreme, and to yield their consent to the marriage long before Dr. Campbell's affairs rendered it advisable.

“ The old man he hoped to succeed was still going about his avocations. And although all the county families saw and lamented his inefficiency, not one had as yet been able to determine to give him up in favour of a young man.

“ Dr. Campbell had therefore only a few poor patients in the small country town. There happened to be no suitable house for them to hire, and it was not thought

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prudent to buy one until some greater certainty of ultimate success was attained, so the young couple went to live with the old Mrs. Campbell, his mother.

"It was a most unhappy arrangement. She was a cross, prejudiced, imperious old lady. She disapproved of the marriage quite as much as the Harveys did, asserting that she wished for no fine English lady for her son's wife, and teaching herself to dislike her gentle daughter-in-law even before she had seen her.

"The poor girl was not at all fitted either to resist unkindness and oppression, or to bear up under them. She could only be patiently, quietly, and intensely miserable.

"Her husband loved her too tenderly not to discover soon how much she suffered; and seeing that her dread of his mother had grown to such a height as that even removal to a home of their own could mend matters but little, so long as they remained in that neighbourhood, he thankfully accepted the offer of an appointment to India.

"It was a good appointment, and everything promised well. But the climate did not agree with Dr. Campbell, and in little more than four years he was obliged to come home, and was told by all the medical men he consulted, that it would be folly for him ever to think of repeating the experiment.

"Until within a few months of their leaving India, Mrs. Campbell had borne the hot climate better than her husband. But a month or two before Hope was born, her second child, a delicate little boy of two years old, died after a long and most painful illness. The anxiety and fatigue of nursing him, and the sorrow of

witnessing his protracted sufferings, had a most injurious effect upon her health.

"Then, peculiar circumstances forced them to set out on their return home, before she had quite recovered her strength after Hope's birth. She suffered terribly from sea-sickness during nearly the whole of a long and very stormy voyage. Her strength declined week by week, and she survived their landing only a day or two.

"Mrs. Denham was waiting their arrival in London, when she received a message from Southampton, to say that Mrs. Campbell was unable to proceed farther. She hastened to her, but arrived only about an hour before her death. And it was during that short meeting and parting that Mrs. Campbell asked and obtained her husband's permission, to give her baby girl into Mrs. Denham's charge."

"But was that not a pity, mamma? Was it not a wrong thing to separate the daughter and sister from her father and brother?"

"It was at least very unwise. But, as I said before, it would be hard to condemn any of the parties concerned for their share in it.

"Think of all the varied and conflicting feelings crowded into that one short hour. Who could be calm enough to weigh contending interests, or look forward to probable consequences?"

"Mrs. Campbell's dislike and dread of her stern mother-in-law had, by constant brooding over it, grown to a morbid height. And it was very natural that she should shrink from leaving her helpless little baby to

her care. During the four years of her absence in India, her tenderly loved sister, Mrs. Denham, had lost her father, mother, and husband, and pity for her loneliness, and desire to give her a new source of interest and happiness, were added to Mrs. Campbell's other motives.

"Perhaps Dr. Campbell ought not to have given his consent ; but overwhelming grief at the loss of his most fondly cherished wife might well plead his excuse. And after he had had time to reflect, he would naturally be unwilling to retract a promise made to the dead, and must besides have felt that the little girl would be better and more tenderly cared for by Mrs. Denham, than she might perhaps be in his home, where there was no mother to watch over and love her.

"When he finally gave her up to Mrs. Denham, he made it to be clearly understood, that he by no means considered himself as freed from all responsibility for, or control over his child. And he stipulated, that he should be kept constantly informed of every particular respecting her, and that she should every year spend a month or two with him.

"To all these conditions Mrs. Denham gave a ready consent, and she fully meant to observe them. Up to this day she has never failed in a constant and regular correspondence by letter ; but the yearly visit, the condition she most disliked, she has constantly evaded.

"She has always had a strong prejudice against Dr. Campbell and his connexions. It began from the first moment when she heard of her cousin's engagement. While watching the sorrow and suffering which the

breaking it off brought upon this dearly-beloved friend, she taught herself to look with dislike upon the innocent cause of it all. And during the five years that intervened between the marriage and Mrs. Campbell's death, every sorrow which the latter had to bear, every regret at their separation, only tended to increase the feeling—a feeling which was of course experienced with tenfold bitterness towards the elder Mrs. Campbell.

“Mrs. Denham has always been more governed by her feelings than by her judgment. She saw clearly that Hope ought not to be suffered to grow up a stranger to her own family, but she could never overcome her repugnance to allow her darling to have any near intercourse with people whom she so much disliked.

“For the first three years after Mrs. Campbell's death, upon the very reasonable plea that Hope was too young to pay a visit by herself, she took lodgings at Seaborough for a month or two every summer, and went there with her. No objection could be offered to such an arrangement, as it allowed Dr. Campbell to see quite as much of his child as he could have done had she lived in his own house, and during their stay Ernest spent the whole of every day with his sister.

“But while these visits did little in the way of removing Mrs. Denham's prejudices against Dr. Campbell, who is too reserved to allow his character to be easily read, or his excellencies soon appreciated, they were all the time greatly strengthening the much more just one which she entertained against Mrs. Campbell.

“That lady cordially disliked Mrs. Denham, and

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lost no opportunity of testifying this feeling, and her disapprobation of the arrangement which took her granddaughter from under her own charge. Indeed, I can well believe that she made herself most particularly disagreeable. And as it was Mrs. Denham's constant habit to indemnify herself for the forced politeness she shewed towards her tormentor, by noting down in her own breast, and dwelling upon all her failings and misdemeanours, we cannot wonder that she should look upon her summer visits as a painful penance, and should shrink sensitively from the prospect of committing her precious charge, even for a few weeks, to the mercy of such a guardian.

"In the fourth summer after Mrs. Campbell's death, measles happened to be very prevalent in Seaborough, and she eagerly seized upon the excuse to put off her annual visit.

"Before another summer came round, Dr. Campbell had married again,—a step which had roused in Mrs. Denham's mind the most unwarrantable and extravagant indignation.

"Since that time, I think, she has ceased all attempt to overcome her prejudices against the whole family. And although she is too right-minded to do anything to implant the same prejudice in Hope's mind, yet she has allowed her feelings to influence her far too much in avoiding all intercourse with them, and in as far as possible shunning every thought or word which could in any way recall to Hope's mind the fact, that she had duties and responsibilities unconnected with her, and



that there was any other person in the world to whom her affections were due.

“ Dr. Campbell's great and ever-increasing practice of course renders it very difficult for him to leave home, and Mrs. Campbell and the younger children have never, so far as I know, been invited. Even to Ernest, who, as her friend's own son, has a claim upon her interest at least, even to him she seems to have extended the dislike she feels to the others, and by inviting him only in company with his father, has effectually kept him also at a distance.

“ And now when it seems only too probable that Hope's happiness must be mainly dependent upon her feelings towards her family, and theirs towards her, she must go among them as a perfect stranger. They must be thrown into all the intimacies of daily domestic life without the least knowledge of, or preparation for each other's peculiar tempers and characters. It is a great, a very great pity. Hope's position in her father's house must have been a difficult one, even if she had received the best possible preparation and training for it ; in her case, poor girl, the preparation and training have tended all the other way.”

“ Poor Hope !” Lucy echoed thoughtfully. “ But then, mamma,” brightening up and speaking with great energy and enthusiasm, “ if any one could get well through the difficulties of such a position, I am sure Hope could. She is such a fine creature. She has such strong decided rules of action, sees so clearly, and judges so well and easily of the right and wrong of things. You

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heard how well she spoke to-day, and how right she was. I was wrong, quite wrong. I had thought only of pitying Ada, and of wishing that she could have got on a little better. Hope saw at once all that she could, and ought to have done. If I were ever to be placed in similar circumstances, I should fear for myself; but I don't fear for Hope in the least. I thought Ada's discontent very natural, but Hope discovered so immediately its unreasonableness and sin."

Mrs. Markham's only answer to this was a smile of very kind interest and attention. Lucy read the smile wrong. She supposed it to imply unqualified assent to her opinions of her friend. But Mrs. Markham knew better than Lucy did the difference between theory and practice—the difference between judging correctly of another's conduct and acting rightly ourselves. Her smile was altogether called up by satisfaction at the light her unconscious child was throwing upon the simplicity and humility of her own mind.

"And it is always the same," Lucy continued, with increased confidence. "Whenever Hope and I discuss the characters in the books we read, she is always so right. Often when I have been making foolish excuses for people, she shews me in a moment the real greatness of their faults. And often, on the other hand, when I am indignant and impatient with the imperfections of other characters, she points out to me their peculiar temptations and difficulties, arising from some peculiarity of temper, habit, or circumstances, and shews me so many little things for which I ought to have made allow-

ance, but which I had quite overlooked. Now, all that uncompromising decided way of judging as to how we ought to think, and feel, and act, and that candid charitable way of judging people—that power of seeing the good points even in the most uninteresting, unattractive characters—should all make us feel pretty confident, that Hope will get on well with these strangers, and in her delicate position. Don't you think so, mamma ?”

“ Perhaps so, my love. Only you know it is easier to judge candidly of imaginary characters, whose failings can never in any way harm us, than of the real people who may be actually giving us serious annoyance. And it is not very difficult to be uncompromising about the duties of others,—is it, Lucy ?”

“ Oh, I understand what you mean, mamma,” Lucy said eagerly. “ But, indeed, you do not know Hope. You cannot think how great is her contempt for people who can see clearly the faults of others, and yet commit the same themselves ; who can, as she says, lay down the law for others, and break it constantly themselves. Indeed, what I liked best in all she said to-day, was the way in which she applied everything to herself. How earnest and animated she looked when she spoke about seeing a moral beauty in the characters of those relations of Ada's whom I had thought so uninteresting and commonplace. No, no, mamma ; you need not fear that Hope will ever shrink from doing what she knows is right, or that she will have one rule of conduct for other people, and a different one for herself.”

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They had now arrived at home, so that Mrs. Markham was spared the necessity of replying, which she could not very well have done, without saying what might perhaps have damped Lucy's confidence in her friend's powers of right acting and right enduring.

As they sat round the fire after dinner, Mrs. Markham told her husband what Lucy had said about Hope's ignorance of Mrs. Denham's danger.

"Well," he answered after a few minutes' thought, "it is perhaps just as well. We can safely trust that Mrs. Denham's tender love of Hope will teach her the wisdom and kindness of preparing the poor girl before the end actually comes; in the meantime, it is as well that Hope should not have any pressing anxiety to prevent her from being a pleasant and cheerful companion in their long journey."

"Oh, but papa," Lucy cried eagerly, "if Hope knew that her mamma's health or peace of mind depended upon her keeping cheerful and composed, not all the anxiety in the world could make her otherwise. You don't know what a strong mind she has, nor how unselfish she is. She has not a particle of selfishness in her composition."

"Is it so, my child? I am glad to hear it. All her unselfishness and self-control will be called into action, I believe, during this residence in a foreign land, where Mrs. Denham will have no one but herself to look to for comfort or support," Dr. Markham answered.

He, like Mrs. Markham, read Hope's character more correctly than Lucy did. But like her also he was not at all anxious to give his child any premature powers

of judging others. He coveted for her, the love that thinketh no evil, far more than the clear-sightedness which can pass over no fault.

Two days after this conversation the travellers left Denham Park. Mrs. Denham bore the long journey remarkably well, and for two or three months her strength increased wonderfully. But as summer came on she felt the heat very oppressive, and soon became aware that she was losing ground much more rapidly than she had gained it.

Had she been alone, and had she had no one's feelings to consult but her own, she would have at once returned home. But she could not bear to disappoint Hope of seeing the many different places she had planned to visit, and she exhausted her fast failing strength in taking her to see everything, which she thought could give her any pleasure.


Pleased and excited, Hope was too much occupied to observe the rapid decline of her adopted mother's health, and it was not until Mrs. Denham began to fear that if she delayed longer she might never reach home in life, that she expressed to Hope the wish to return at once.

Their journey home was much more tedious than their outward one had been. And Mrs. Denham's increasing inability to bear each day's fatigue, for the first time opened Hope's eyes to her real state.

They reached home about the beginning of September, and very soon after Mrs. Denham was wholly confined to that bed from which she was never to rise again.

### CHAPTER III.

#### HOPE A HEROINE.

URING the last weeks of Mrs. Denham's illness, Hope's conduct more than realized Lucy's fondest anticipations.

Mrs. Denham's care of Hope had been so entirely a labour of love, that I do not like to use the term reward in reference to it. But certainly Hope was now doing her utmost to pay back the love and tenderness, which had been so profusely poured forth upon herself, which had so anxiously watched over her since her early infancy, and had so unweariedly laboured for her welfare and happiness.

Every selfish thought and wish seemed forgotten. Her whole heart was bent upon promoting the peace and comfort of her dying friend—her whole mind given to find out the best means of doing so. And love taught her an unselfish wisdom, of which even those who loved her best had not supposed her capable, and in which many an older and more experienced nurse is found wanting.

Although she grudged every moment that was passed away from her mother's bedside, although during every

absence she was haunted by a painful, feverish kind of anxiety, yet she yielded instant compliance to Mrs. Denham's wishes whenever she asked her to go out to walk, or drive, or, far more painful trial, to leave her at night and sleep in a room distant enough to insure her being undisturbed by the patient's fits of coughing, or by the frequent movements in the sick-room, which her painful restlessness rendered necessary.

Although her heart shrunk painfully from the faintest allusion to their approaching separation, yet as soon as she found that it was a real comfort to Mrs. Denham to speak of her death, she nerved herself bravely to listen calmly to all she said upon the subject, and even to lead the conversation towards it, when she fancied she could see that regard for her feelings prevented a recurrence to it. And in spite of the jealous desire she felt, that no hands but her own should enjoy the privilege of ministering to the sufferer's comfort, she cheerfully yielded to Mrs. Markham the task of supporting her, or changing her posture, and arranging her pillows whenever she perceived that anxiety about her fatigue was disturbing her mother's mind.

As the end evidently drew near, Dr. and Mrs. Markham pressed upon Mrs. Denham's notice the propriety of making Dr. and Mrs. Campbell acquainted with the true state of matters, but she had an invincible repugnance to doing so. And it was not until the very day before her death, that she finally consented to Dr. Markham's writing.

After the letter was sent off, her mind seemed to be divided between the desire of having no strangers present

to mar the peace and freedom of the parting scene, and the hope of being able to give Dr. Campbell such advice regarding Hope, as she believed her superior knowledge of her character warranted her in offering, and as might insure her dear one's happiness in the new situation in which she was to be placed.

During the last day of her life, she spoke more to Hope about her father and his family than she had done through all her life before, and gave her much advice about her conduct towards them. But unfortunately it was not judicious advice.

Through the whole course of Hope's education, her happiness had been, far too exclusively, her teacher's aim in all her efforts.

Mrs. Denham was a sincere and devoted Christian. In her own case she fully realized the great truth, that conformity to God's will, and not her own happiness, ought to be the aim of her life. But as regarded the darling of her heart, she had constantly, though very unconsciously, placed the lesser before the greater.

It is true that Hope had never been foolishly over-indulged. But that was only because Mrs. Denham knew that such indulgence must ultimately defeat its own object, and injure instead of increase her happiness. Fits of idleness or indolence had never been suffered to interfere with her appointed studies ; nor had her taste been too much regarded in the arranging of them. But that was only because Mrs. Denham knew that a well-cultivated mind would open up fresh sources of enjoyment to her young charge—not because she recognised



Hope's responsibility to God for the due improvement of every talent with which He had intrusted her. And the governing motive in checking evil tempers and habits, was the fear of the unhappiness they must ultimately bring upon their possessor, not the knowledge of their sinfulness against God.

The same feelings governed her to the last. She was far more solicitous about Hope's peace and comfort, than about her conduct in her new situation. She thought little about Hope's duties to her new relatives. Her whole mind was filled with anxiety about their feelings towards her. And instead of enforcing upon her child's mind the various motives which ought to influence her to the due discharge of these duties, she was only occupied in giving her advice how to act, so as to win the love and admiration which she thought essential to her happiness.

The injudiciousness of such advice was farther aggravated by the narrow and prejudiced views which she entertained of the characters of those with whom Hope was now to associate.

She had taught herself to regard Dr. Campbell as a stern, cold-hearted man. And although she had too much good feeling to attempt directly to convey such impressions of him to his daughter's mind, yet such was unfortunately too much the effect of her words.

She cautioned Hope, that her father was not a man who would have much patience with any undue display of feeling. And using the strong argument, that any fault which might be found with her conduct would be

imputed to her instructor's deficiency in wisdom and care, she exhorted her to restrain her feelings of sorrow as much as possible, and to guard against their interfering, in any way, with a due regard to her father's wishes.

The argument was all-powerful with Hope, and so misled her judgment, as to make her incapable of either reading her father's character correctly, or of governing her own conduct by more simple and natural principles.

Owing to the delay in writing to Dr. Campbell, he could not reach Denham Park until the evening of the day after Mrs. Denham's death. And during these first four-and-twenty hours, Hope gave herself up without restraint to the indulgence of her grief.

But as the time drew near when he might be expected to arrive, she began steadfastly to prepare herself for her supposed duty, and to put on a stoicism as unwholesome as it was unnatural.

She received him with the quiet self-possession of a woman of thirty, answered all his questions about Mrs. Denham's illness with grave, sad calmness, and herself gave all the orders for his comfortable accommodation, with as much scrupulous attention as if his had been an ordinary visit of ceremony, and she had been sole mistress of the establishment for at least a dozen years.

Nor was this a mere temporary effort. During the few days they remained at Denham Park, she preserved unbroken, the same cold, calm demeanour. All the duties of hospitality were discharged, with as much careful observance and punctuality as if nothing had occurred to break the usual regular routine of daily life. And

Dr. Campbell and Mrs. Denham's man of business found her always ready to listen with quiet attention to any details of business it was proper she should be made acquainted with, and to answer, with steady composure, any questions which it was necessary to ask her, even when they were of a nature most fitted to recall past events, and to remind her of present sorrows.

Months afterwards, Hope saw and acknowledged the error of her conduct at this time,—saw that she had mistaken an unnecessary mortification of good and right feeling for a virtuous self-denial, and, not content with attaining a proper amount of self-command, had done her best to harden her heart. She saw that in order to secure herself against all undue manifestation of feeling, she had tried to crush down a sorrow which was only becoming, and should have been both purifying and elevating ; that, afraid of the softening influence the remembrance of her lost friend might exercise upon her, she had resolutely striven to banish every tender recollection of her goodness and excellency, and had taken refuge in forgetfulness, that most unprofitable and injurious of all the modes of receiving affliction—a forgetfulness as hurtful to the living as it was dishonouring to the dead.

But these were all after-thoughts. At the time, she was comfortably wrapped up in self-complacency and self-praise, and looked upon herself as a heroine of the highest class ; and like all self-constituted heroines, she felt as if there were a kind of merit in the severity of her trial, and never paused to reflect how much of that

severity was of God's appointing, or how far she had gone out of her way to meet it. She gloried in every self-sacrifice she could devise, and never deigned to consider whether they were necessary or useless, whether they were calculated, or the contrary, to fit her for the new duties which lay before her.

It so happened that her brother Ernest was spending his vacation on the Continent with some college friends, and so was, of course, beyond recall at this time. But while Dr. Campbell frequently expressed regret at the circumstance, as depriving Hope of a younger and more gentle and tender comforter than himself, she felt a secret satisfaction in everything that rendered her situation more lonely, and more deserving of pity.

In the same spirit, when, prompted by the suggestions of his tender-hearted wife, Dr. Campbell proposed that Hope should remain for a few weeks with the Markhams, that she might have the comfort of their sympathy during the first bitterness of her sorrow, and said that he or Mrs. Campbell would gladly come for her at any time when she might wish to go home, Hope declined the offer, and steadily withstood all Lucy's tearful entreaties and Mrs. Markham's wise arguments. She chose to fancy, that duty required her to do everything painful to herself, and all such pain she was resolute to bear without complaint.

As Dr. Campbell's professional engagements rendered a long absence from home very inconvenient, he was forced to fix upon the second morning after the funeral for their departure. One day after that trying scene,

he considerably allowed Hope to recover from the agitation into which he supposed it must throw her, but more he could not give. And, indeed, it almost seemed as if that one day had been unnecessary.

She met him at dinner, on his return from the mournful ceremony, with the same quiet, attentive, lady-of-the-house air, which she had displayed all along. She spent the whole of the following day in looking over and destroying Mrs. Denham's letters and private papers, and in putting up and sending off the various little remembrances which that lady's will had directed to be given to distant friends, and went through these melancholy tasks with a mechanical regularity and composure which seemed to Mrs. Markham, her assistant, most painfully unnatural.

They were to leave Denham Park early in the forenoon. Hope made breakfast for her father as usual. As usual she replaced the sugar-glass, &c., in their place, locked the tea-caddy, and quietly and without emotion deposited the key in a drawer where all the others belonging to the house had been placed. She then turned to her father and asked him calmly at what hour the carriage would be at the door.

"At half-past ten, just an hour hence," he said, glancing anxiously at her pale unmoved face, adding, "I am surprised that Mrs. Markham has not come. I asked her to be here early. I was anxious that you should not be alone at such a trying time."

Hope answered quietly, that she had wished to be alone, and had begged Mrs. Markham not to come, as

a second parting would only give unnecessary pain to all parties.

She then rang the bell, gave orders about the carriage, and, telling her father that she should be ready in time, left the room.

She stood a moment at the door as if hesitating, then crossed the hall with hurried steps, opened a door on the opposite side, and entered the long passage leading to the library, without seeing a group of the female servants who were standing together waiting for her, and without hearing the earnest, tearful "Miss Hope, my dear," of the old housekeeper.

"Poor thing! Poor young thing!" said several of the women, looking after her.

"She will have a sore heart to-day, leaving the old place, and all the things," said Mrs. Andrews.

"Yes," rejoined Mary, who had been Mrs. Denham's and Hope's own maid. "And they say it is such a poor place she is going to. They do say that Dr Campbell is only a country doctor, and lives in a poor miserable little village."

"He is our Miss Hope's father," said Mrs. Andrews, drawing herself up with dignity; "and it does not become you, Mary, to speak disrespectfully of him or his."

Mary apologized humbly, but said she was only sorry for the dear young lady's going away to a poorer kind of place than she had been used to. And she only wondered how Mrs. Denham, who was so rich, and loved her so dearly, had not left her money enough to let her live where she liked.

Mrs. Andrews could not bear that even a shadow of blame should rest upon her much-loved mistress, and she rebutted the implied charge, with the air of one to whose care the vindication of the family honour had been committed.

She reminded Mary that Mrs. Denham could not leave her property to Hope, and said she had made as good a provision for her as she could ; but that, living so nobly as she had done, and spending her money so generously, it was not to be expected that she should lay by much.

Mary stood in considerable awe of the housekeeper, but she was only half satisfied with her explanations, and muttered something about thinking that it would have been better not to have spent so much upon Miss Hope before, so that she might have been able to leave her a little, when she must have much greater need of it.

" But I tell you, she has left her something," angrily retorted the housekeeper. " I asked Mrs. Markham herself. I thought, being such an old servant of the family, I might take that liberty ; and she told me that they hoped there would be between six and seven thousand pounds for Miss Hope, besides a thousand for Master Ernest her brother. But," suddenly interrupting herself, " I wonder what the poor dear is about all this time in that room by herself. I have a great mind to go to her."

And the other servants urging her to do so, she went to the library at once.

In the meantime, what had Hope been about ?

When she entered the room she carefully closed the door behind her, and stood just within it quite still, with her eyes bent on the ground, as if afraid to look around. Her colour came and went rapidly—her breathing was hurried and oppressed. The task she had laid upon herself seemed too painful, and once she turned to the door, and laid her hand on the lock, as if to leave the room without accomplishing her purpose.

But she could not suffer herself to be thus overcome. With a violent effort she conquered her emotion, and quickly crossing the room, she stood in front of the fireplace. Another moment she paused ere she slowly and resolutely raised her eyes to the picture of Mrs. Denham, which hung over the mantel-piece.

It was a beautiful whole-length portrait the size of life, and did full justice not only to the lovely features and graceful figure of the original, but also to the gentle, tender expression of her eyes and mouth.

Hope gazed upon it long and earnestly, then suddenly throwing up her arms with a gesture of despair, she cried out, "Mother, O mother, what shall I do?" and turning away, she threw herself on her face upon a sofa, and gave full way to the feelings she had so long suppressed.

Memory and sorrow now took full revenge for the violence which had been done them; and as wave after wave of tender recollections passed through her mind, her whole frame shook with convulsive sobs, and she felt as if mind and body must both give way under the intense anguish she was enduring.

How long she lay thus, she never knew. Time and



place were quite forgotten ; and she might have remained in the same posture until the carriage came to the door, had she not been roused by the entrance of the house-keeper.

But I should not say by the entrance, for that she did not hear. The good woman had come up to the sofa, had stood for some minutes by her side awed into silence by the excessive grief she witnessed, and Hope remained quite unconscious that any one was near.

Mrs. Andrews had been in the service of the Harvey family for more than forty years. She had known and loved Hope's mother when she was quite a little child, and Hope herself had been her pet and darling ever since she had been brought a helpless baby to Denham Park, nearly seventeen years ago.

The good old woman's tears flowed in ready sympathy as she stood looking upon her, and while thinking of all the causes she had to sorrow, she forgot the purport of her visit, until the sound of the clock striking ten roused her to a recollection of the necessity of getting Hope ready for her journey.

She spoke to her gently, but Hope did not hear. She knelt down beside her and laid her hand upon her shoulder, saying, in a voice broken with tears, " Miss Hope, my dear."

Hope started up, and seeing who was beside her, she threw her arms round her neck, buried her face in her bosom, crying out—

" Oh, Mrs. Andrews, what shall I do ? what shall I do ? I cannot bear it—cannot bear it."

"Hush, hush, my darling, you must not speak so. Remember, it is the Lord that sends it all. Remember, you must bear what the Lord sends;" and she smoothed her hair, kissed her forehead and hot tearless eyes, and lavished on her all the tender caresses and endearing names she had been used to give the little child, but which the young girl had long since outgrown.

But all her efforts seemed vain. Hope's sobs grew more and more violent, and her only answer was a wild passionate repetition of the words, "I cannot, I cannot."

"But, my dear Miss Hope, it is almost time for you to go. And what will your father say if he finds you in this way, and he such a grave man? I am afraid he won't be pleased. He'll think we have spoiled you, Miss Hope, my dear."

All unconsciously she had touched the chord, which had already been so unwisely made to vibrate. In a moment Hope was recalled to all the thoughts and feelings which had been influencing her through the past week. She gently disengaged herself from the housekeeper's arms, sat up on the sofa, and swallowing down the choking sobs which rose in her throat, she said resolutely—

"You are right, dear Mrs. Andrews. Papa must not see me thus. He must not suppose that I have not been taught to know and to do my duty, however difficult."

"Yes, my dear, that is a good young lady," said the housekeeper, greatly relieved by the sudden change,

without fully understanding the cause ; " you must not let him think that my poor dear lady did not teach you right."

" No one shall ever see in my conduct reason to think so," Hope said proudly.

At that moment the door opened, and Mrs. Markham came in.

" Ah ! Mrs. Markham, why did you not come a few minutes earlier ? How much good might you not have done had you been with Hope while her heart was softened, and her spirit broken down with grief ! Now it is too late. The favourable moment is past."

Hope rose and received her visitor almost coldly. She was so afraid, poor child, of losing again her hard-won self-possession. She dreaded the softening influence of an affectionate word, or even of a kind look.

" I thought you were not to come this morning," she said in a constrained voice ; " I thought the pain of bidding you good-bye was over."

" I knew—I felt, dear Hope, that you must wish to come here once more, and I did not think that you had strength to come alone," she answered mildly. " I purposed to be here earlier, but was most unexpectedly detained."

Hope followed the direction of Mrs. Markham's eyes as she glanced at the picture, and said in a tone which all her resolution could not make steady—

" I thought that was to be mine. Ma——" she could not say the word, " I was told so."

" Your mamma meant that it should be so, my love.

But it was found that she had not the power to dispose of it, as it had belonged to Mr. Denham."

Mrs. Markham purposely used, and laid an emphasis on the tender name which Hope had been always accustomed to give her kind guardian. She had remarked the poor girl's inability to pronounce it, and she wished to soften her, and to subdue the unnatural hardness in which she had clothed herself.

But she did not succeed. Hope shivered from head to foot, and grasped convulsively Mrs. Markham's hand, which she still held, as if to keep herself from falling ; but she was resolute not to give way, and in another minute was as calm as ever.

Mrs. Markham looked at her with affectionate solicitude.

"I had another purpose in coming, my love," she said, putting her arm round her. "I wished to try once more to persuade you, not to leave us quite so soon, but to remain with us for at least a week or two."

Hope shook her head.

"You don't know your own weakness, my child. You are not able to bear this parting yet," Mrs. Markham urged ; and she would have said much more, but Hope interrupted her.

"Do not give me more pain by making me refuse your request, dear Mrs. Markham. I ought not to stay. It is my duty to go."

"You are mistaken, my love,—I am sure you are," was Mrs. Markham's earnest answer. "It cannot be your duty to struggle against right and natural feelings.

It would be far better that you should, in the first bitterness and freshness of your sorrow, be with those who knew and loved her whom you mourn. However kind your new friends may be, and however anxious to sympathize with you, still their sorrow in your sorrow cannot be a personal one—cannot be so deep or lasting as yours. You may be tempted to forget this, and to charge them unjustly with unkindness or indifference. You may perhaps be tempted, on this very account, to cherish towards them feelings such as must unfit you for the right discharge of your duties towards them.”

But Hope's duties towards her new relatives had as yet little place in her thoughts. She had set her heart upon shewing herself as a heroine before them, and common sense and prudence had little chance of being attended to, while this fair vision was dazzling her mind.

Mrs. Markham soon saw that it would be useless to press the matter any further, and that the only good she could now do to Hope, would be to help her to gather strength for her self-imposed trial, and by her presence restrain the ill-timed expressions of grief, in which she knew the old servants would be disposed to indulge.

There was fortunately little time for any lengthened scene. By the time Hope's hurried toilet was over, the carriage was at the door. A fervent pressure of the hand of each as they crowded round her in the hall, a long heartfelt kiss from Mrs. Markham, and she was in the carriage.

Dr. Campbell was a man of few words, but Mrs.

Markham thought his look more eloquent than speech, as he said merely, "Thank you, and good-bye," when he shook hands with her, before taking his seat beside Hope.

As the carriage drove off, Hope leant forward to take a last look of the house. But it was too much for her, and she sank back with a kind of groan.

"My dear Hope," said her father, very kindly, "you are trying your strength too much. You are not able for this journey. Be persuaded to change your mind while it is still time, and stay with your kind friends. I will come for you in a month—in a week, if you like—whenever you wish—only stay now. Indeed you must," he added decidedly, as he saw that she was quite faint, and had not even strength to form the words she wished to utter. And he leant forward to pull the check string.

Hope laid her hand upon his arm to stop him, and struggling powerfully with her emotion, contrived to make him understand that she really wished to go on.

He did not like to press the matter further. Strangers as they were to each other, he feared she might imagine that her going home was unwelcome to himself, or to some other member of the family. He contented himself, therefore, with doing all he could for her present comfort.

He made her put up her feet on the opposite seat of the carriage, transformed a pile of shawls and cloaks into a cushion for her head, and, wrapping her carefully up in a warm plaid, he let down the window at her side of the carriage, that the fresh air might revive her.

Having completed these arrangements, he watched her anxiously until he saw tears begin to flow softly from under the closed eyelids, and a little colour come back to her pale lips, when he turned from her, and affected to be wholly engrossed in his book, so as to allow her to indulge in her sorrow with as little restraint as possible from his presence.

Hope ought to have taken notice of this kind consideration, and to have felt grateful for it. But she did not. Her thoughts were too much occupied with her own feelings, and with the best means of stilling the strong cry of anguish which was continually rising from her heart, and threatening wholly to overcome the heroic calmness it was her ambition to display.

Finding that the tender memories associated with every shrub and tree they passed were constantly renewing the conflict, and threatening to decide it against her, she strove resolutely to turn her thoughts into some new direction. Self was unfortunately the direction into which her mind always most naturally turned, and self-pity and self-praise soon so entirely occupied her, that the composure she was striving for was placed beyond all danger of an overthrow.

This was not attained to all at once, it is true. Every now and then, as some turn of the road brought before her some very familiar object, a gush of softened feeling would pass over her heart, and bring the tears to her eyes. But as her meditations on her own character and perfections grew more and more interesting, such relapses became less and less frequent, until they ceased

altogether ; and before they reached the town, where they were to meet the mail, she really felt tolerably happy in the prospects of the future she had conjured up.

She had settled exactly the kind of welcome she was to receive at home. She had been introduced to her step-mother, to her brothers and sisters, and to Mrs. Campbell's two daughters, the Miss Drummonds,—for that lady was a widow when Dr. Campbell married her.

Her step-mother she had found a kind, well-meaning sort of woman, standing a good deal in awe of her highly cultivated step-daughter—an awe which had been speedily changed into admiration and affection, when she had felt the influence of that young lady's gentle, pleasant manners, and had seen her unaffected desire to give pleasure to every one around her.

The little brothers and sisters she had found awkward and shy. But her peculiarly winning smile, her gentle kindness, had soon overcome their strangeness, and she was comfortably seated on a sofa, with one little girl on her knee, and another by her side, while she was pleasantly and persuasively pointing out to them some little faults which they were in the habit of committing, and making the path of duty look bright and attractive to their young minds by her well-chosen words, and the kind cheerful voice in which she uttered them, when she was roused from her reveries by her father addressing to her some remark upon the beauty of the scene through which they were passing.

She did not much like the interruption, and answered



so absently and coldly as effectually to stop all his attempts at conversation.

I think I have told you that he was a very shy man. He felt painfully the awkwardness of his position with his stranger daughter, and anxious to remove from her mind this feeling of strangership, which he felt to be so uncomfortable, he had made a strong effort to shake off his reserve, that he might lead her gradually to converse easily and pleasantly with him. Her cold short answer completely defeated his object, and made him feel ten times more uncomfortable than before. But while Hope was so agreeably occupied, winning her way to the hearts of the whole family to whom she was going, it was not to be expected that she should have much attention to spare for the comfort or happiness of the one member of it who was seated by her side.

Besides, she had before her the most difficult and most interesting part of her task.

The two Miss Drummonds, as she fancied, were strongly prejudiced against her. They thought that she, as her father's eldest daughter, was coming to encroach upon their privileges, as the young ladies of the household,—that she was coming to put them out of the important places they had so long occupied, and with all her superiority of mind and manner, to lower them in the estimation of themselves and of others.

From such anticipations they had taught themselves to regard her with suspicion and dislike, and these feelings Hope must now set herself to overcome.

It was a difficult task, requiring both wisdom and

tact. Nor were wisdom and tact enough by themselves ; united with them there must also be self-forgetfulness, humility, and patience. But, fortunately, those were the very virtues which from her earliest childhood Hope had been most carefully taught to cherish and to exercise.

It was a severe and protracted struggle. Long and obstinately did Julia and Anne hold out against Hope's gentle seductions. But in the end she triumphed. How could it be otherwise ? Who could withstand the sweet cheerful patience with which she bore all their ill-humour, or fail to be touched with her candour, charity, and willingness to be pleased ? When they had seen that all her superior talents and acquirements made her only the more indulgent to their deficiencies, and the more quick-sighted to their merits,—when they had reaped the advantage of her constant readiness to oblige, a disinterested readiness which was far more concerned to give pleasure than to win praise, which made her willing to leave all showy, ostentatious services to others, and watch only to perform those smaller ones which others disliked, or overlooked ; and when they had learned to trust her unwearied kindness and gentle sympathy,—then they acknowledged the falsity of the ideas they had entertained of her, and allowed her, without reserve, to establish herself queen of their hearts, as she had long been of the hearts of all the rest of the family.

Having thus triumphantly conquered the small dominion of home, she began to advance with flying colours, and in full spirit and hope, upon the more extended region of a country neighbourhood, preparing to lay

siege to, and to capture the hearts of all her new acquaintances, young and old, rich and poor.

But, unfortunately, the realities of life seldom suit themselves to the conveniences of dream-land. Mrs. Denham's good grey horses had performed their twelve miles' journey rather more expeditiously than Hope quite liked, and they had arrived at the small town where they were to meet the mail, a good deal sooner than was necessary or convenient.

Three quarters of an hour's idle waiting in the dirty uncomfortable parlour of a particularly dirty uncomfortable inn, was not, it must be confessed, a good preparation for a first trial of the pleasures and comforts of a stage-coach journey.

A quiet, cheerful contentment under all the ills of life had been one characteristic of the heroine whose success in life Hope had been so triumphantly following. But I suspect, that she had not included among these the pains and penalties of a fifteen hours' journey in a small coach, without room to stretch her limbs or change her posture, her feet trodden on, and her shoulders bruised by the eccentric restlessness of the sleeping man beside her, and her ears stunned, and her head made to ache, with the sharp high voice of the talking lady in the other corner. At any rate, I know that contentment under these annoyances was perhaps as far as possible from poor Hope's mind.

She had too much sense of dignity, or pride, call it what you like, to indulge in fretful complaints; but her countenance sufficiently expressed the disgust and

indignation wherewith she was filled. In answering her father's kind questions about her comfort, or in listening to the vulgar, harsh-voiced, but kind-hearted lady's well-meant attempts to amuse her, her manner was alternately that of a queen or princess in disguise, and of a martyr suffering unheard-of misery in the path of duty. And while she distressed the one by her frequent long-drawn melancholy sighs, she abashed the other by the supercilious silence, or still more supercilious "Oh, indeed!" with which she received her most interesting pieces of information.

Altogether, her conduct was so far removed from the heroic that it becomes incumbent on me at once to conclude this chapter.

Before doing so, however, I wish to address a few words to my readers.

On all sides I hear vehement outcries against poor Hope's self-conceit and presumption, and I wish to ask you to pause a moment, ere you wholly and for ever cast her out of your regard.

Remember how important a place she has always filled in the affection and attention of the friend with whom she has lived. She was not merely the representative of a tenderly loved sister, she also held the place of father, mother, and husband. She was the one object upon whom all her best affections and dearest interests were centred. How Hope was, what she did, said, thought, and felt, were to Mrs. Denham the things of greatest interest in the world. Whatever in any way concerned her, or had the remotest influence upon her

welfare and happiness, was first to be thought of and cared for ; and in all the household arrangements, everything was made to give way to whatever could, in any manner, contribute to her good or comfort.

Was it then wonderful that she had early learned to look upon herself as somewhat above the common rank of young people, as one whom the world could not very well do without ?

And Mrs. Denham's very anxiety to make her young charge a piece of perfection, had tended in no small degree to foster that self-esteem of which you so loudly complain.

In order to form and direct her judgment, Mrs. Denham had been in the habit of discussing with her the characters and conduct of all the individuals of whom they read in the pages of either history or fiction. And as Hope was clever, and had a clear head, and considerable powers of observation, her remarks on these subjects were always so correct and judicious, that Mrs. Denham might have been excused for the great admiration they excited in her, and which she expressed more unreservedly than was quite good for its object.

Hope had naturally no very strong passions or evil tempers, and in the guarded secluded life she had led, she had been exposed to few temptations, so that she had never been taught by experience, the difficulty of walking in that path of duty which she could so clearly point out to others. And it was not very strange that she and her admiring instructress should fail to perceive the difference between knowing and doing that which was

right, between being able to judge correctly of the conduct of others, and being ready to carry out such judgments in her own daily life.


Hope had for years been so constantly in the habit of concluding her animadversions of other people with the assertion, "I could not have acted so,—in such and such cases, such and such should have been my feelings and conduct," that she had persuaded both herself and Mrs. Denham, that all these supposed virtues were realities, and neither the one nor the other thought of doubting her perfect ability to pass, unblameable and unscathed, through any path of life which might be before her.

So you see, my dear young readers, there was some excuse for her self-confidence ; and, begging you always to bear this in mind, and to excuse this interruption to my story, I shall conclude this chapter, and Hope's long tedious journey at the same moment.



## CHAPTER IV.

### THE NEW HOME

HE travellers arrived about four in the morning at a town between twenty and thirty miles from Scarborough. Here they remained for a short time, and Hope enjoyed the refreshment of two or three hours' repose.

For her sake Dr. Campbell wished to defer the remainder of their journey until the afternoon coach passed. But, feverish from excitement and anxious expectation, she felt less fatigue than she did some days after, and she entreated him so earnestly to go on at once that he consented, and engaged place in the coach which left at nine in the morning.

A little after twelve they got to Mainton, where the Doctor's own phaeton was waiting for them.

Hope felt considerable satisfaction when her eyes rested upon this well-appointed gentlemanly equipage. The handsome carriage, the fine horse, well-kept harness and smart groom with his plain but tasteful livery, suited her ideas of propriety, and seemed to hold out a fair promise of the style in which the family lived.

"All well, Brian?" Dr. Campbell asked, as the groom came forward to take charge of the shawls and cloaks

"All well at home, sir. But Sir Charles Grant has met with a bad accident. There have been two messengers from the Castle for you this morning."

"And did Mr. Baillie not go?"

"No, sir; he was off on his rounds before the first message came. We sent after him. But he has gone far up the glen way, and my mistress is afraid it will be long before the messenger can overtake him."

"Well, it is unfortunate, but it cannot be helped," was Dr. Campbell's only remark, as he gave Hope his arm to lead her to the carriage.

"But my mistress thought you would maybe like to go straight, sir, and I could take the young lady home in the inn drosky. My mistress made me put in all your things to be ready."

Dr. Campbell hesitated, but as he glanced at Hope's pale and anxious face, and read in it an expression of dismay at the prospect of going through the formidable introduction alone, he was at once decided.

"No, I should not save more than five, or ten minutes at the most," he said, and handing her in, he occupied himself in wrapping her up from the cold wind, with as much care as if he had had no greater anxiety on his mind.

Grateful for this attention to her feelings, Hope exerted herself to suggest, that her larger boxes might be left for some other opportunity, and to point out the only one she should require immediately. When this had been safely deposited in the boot, they drove off at a rapid pace, Brian and his good horse seeming to be equally impressed with the urgency of the occasion.



It was a fine bright October day, but very cold. A north wind blew from the sea direct in their faces, and penetrated through all the coverings in which Hope was wrapped. Between the cold wind, and the nervous dread of the first interview so rapidly approaching, she felt chilled to the very heart. And by the time they drove up the main street of Seaborough, her faculties seemed frozen up, and she felt incapable of entertaining even any natural curiosity about the aspect of the place where her future days were to be passed, or of looking round to observe or understand anything.

There was not much beauty to be seen in Seaborough, it must be confessed. The surrounding country was picturesque, and abounded in lovely scenery, but the town itself was very ugly.

It had the air of having been built by at least fifty independent architects, who had each consulted his own taste and judgment alone ; one part of the main street being as wide and straight as the very next part was narrow and crooked. On all sides substantial stone houses, standing back in their neat gardens, alternated with gaudy shop-fronts encroaching upon the whole breadth of the pavement ; with tall, gaunt, dilapidated brick buildings, that seemed begging for leave to fall back or forward, and disappear from a sphere in which they were neither ornamental nor useful ; and with mean-looking thatched cottages, whose numerous tribes of dirty children round the doors, spoke only too plainly of the character of their inhabitants.

Hope merely glanced with a slight feeling of disgust

upon these various incongruities. She was too cold to feel as much mortified as in other circumstances she might have done. And when the carriage went on quite to the end of the town, and drew up at the gate of her future home, she was scarcely conscious of the relief it really was to her, to find that it was as unlike as possible to all the houses they had passed.

It is true, that straight opposite there was a row of most unhappy-looking, tumble-down, red-tiled houses ; but the high wall round the little front-green, with one or two pretty lilac and laburnum trees, very tolerably shut out all unpleasant sights, and with the house itself no one could find cause for complaint.

It had been the manor-house of the property upon which the little town was built, and had an old-fashioned, quaint, and yet comfortable look about it, that might have satisfied the most fastidious taste.

Hope had little time, and less inclination, to take note of these matters. Almost as soon as the carriage stopped, the gate was thrown open, and two little girls rushed out, breathlessly eager to overwhelm their father with the news of Sir Charles Grant's accident, and of the impossibility of finding Mr. Baillie.

They were closely followed by their mother. Hope's heart beat thick and fast, her eyes grew dim, and her knees trembled as she came down out of the carriage, to go through the long-thought-of introduction.

All her purposed self-possession and pleasant frankness were now as completely out of her power, as out of her mind.

How could that trembling hand be gracefully extended? How could those lips, stiff from cold, and quivering with agitation, form themselves into the winning, fascinating smiles with which she had purposed to dispel Mrs. Campbell's supposed awkwardness and embarrassment?

But, fortunately, they were all unnecessary. Mrs. Campbell was, at such a moment, as little capable of feeling embarrassed or awkward, as of taking any note of smiles, looks, or words. Unlike Hope, it had never occurred to her to anticipate this meeting, or to plan out her own conduct under it, and therefore her manner was as natural and cordial as Hope's was nervous and constrained.

The one feeling that filled her heart was sorrow for the motherless girl, coming thus a stranger to her father's house; its one wish that of making her home happy and comfortable.

Hope never knew exactly what had passed. She had felt some one's arm thrown affectionately round her, and had been conscious of a hearty kiss being pressed upon her forehead. But she did not think that a single word had passed on either side. And she found herself, she hardly knew how, walking up the gravel walk to the house, leaning upon Mrs. Campbell's arm, and Dr. Campbell following, with a little girl in each hand.

Mrs. Campbell was an excellent woman of business, ready for any emergency, never put out, never in a bustle. During this short walk she had, without any formal speech or direct assertion, contrived to make Hope feel that her arrival had been much thought of and looked

forward to, and that she was not regarded as a mere guest, but as a child of the house ; while she had also found time to give Dr. Campbell all necessary information about the Baronet's accident.

As they reached the hall door, he asked if the messenger from the Castle had gone away.

"No," Mrs. Campbell said ; she had detained him that the Doctor might himself see, and question him. He was in the study. And, she added, that there was a gentleman in the dining-room, who said he must see Dr. Campbell, but promised not to detain him above a minute or two.

"Very well, I'll see him presently," was his only remark. He seemed to take things as coolly as his wife did, and to be as little put out with all this hurry and bustle immediately upon his arrival from a long journey, as if it were the most ordinary matter in the world. As he laid his hand on the lock of the study door, he turned to say to Hope—

"You had better rest, my dear ; you must be very tired."

"Yes, indeed," said Mrs. Campbell, "and terribly cold. Should you not like to go to bed at once, and try to get a sleep?"

No. Hope was sure she could not sleep. And, feeling that just at the moment the quietness and solitude of bed would be intolerable to her, she very decidedly negatived the proposal.

"Very well, my dear, just as you like," Mrs. Campbell said in a pleasant tone. "But you had better come

to your room, and get off your bonnet and cloak, and then you can lie down on the sofa, beside the fire."

They had reached the foot of the staircase, when a maid-servant rushed out of a side passage, with a face full of consternation—

"Oh, ma'am," cried she, "here is Nanny Orr with her little lassie, and it is so terribly burnt! Can she see the Doctor?"

"Not immediately. But I will come and see about her. Hope, my dear," turning to her, "you will excuse me for a few minutes. And do you, Fanny, take your sister up to her room, and help her to take off her things. And if the gentleman should be still in the dining-room, bring her down to the school-room, there is a good fire there."

The eldest of the two little girls came forward at these words. She would not take Hope's offered hand, but went up before her, turning round every now and then to peep at her, with a face full of shyness, curiosity, and a certain self-complacency at being intrusted with such an important duty.

These varied feelings so filled her mind, that she either had not attended to, or had forgotten her mother's instructions, for instead of conducting Hope to her own room, she led her to the drawing-room. And having held the door open for her admission, she hastily closed it after her, and ran off to communicate to any one who would listen, her impressions of the new sister whose arrival had been so long talked of.

Thus left alone, Hope had time to look round her.

The drawing-room was very long, with three large windows down one side, and two at one end. The former looked west, over a very pretty garden at the back of the house. The others commanded a fine view of the sea. But, unfortunately, one of them had been left a little bit open, and the chill north wind blew in most uncomfortably, making Hope look with dismay at the bright polished fireless grate.

The whole room had a cold, uninhabited, desolate look. The furniture was good and handsome, but it was arranged with that stiff attention to straightness and propriety, which surely betokens a room meant more for show than use.

"The thing of all others I most detest," Hope thought discontentedly. "It is such a sign of vulgarity and meanness to keep all one's best things for mere show. Oh, mamma, mamma, what a different home this must be from yours! How shall I ever be able to endure it?"

Her meditations were here interrupted by the entrance of a girl about her own age. Hope thought her the most unattractive-looking personage she had ever beheld.

Without any deformity of either face or figure, plainness was most undeniably the characteristic of both. Her tall thin figure was perfectly straight and erect, but angular and awkward to the last degree. Not one of her features could be pronounced positively ugly in itself, but the immovable calmness of her expression amounted almost to stupidity, and her complexion, eyes, and hair, seemed all to partake more or less of the same indescrib-

able pale greyish brown tint, or, as Hope called it, dust colour.

She walked straight up to Hope, and said abruptly—

“I am Anne Drummond. Fanny told me she had left you here, and I came to ask you if you should like to go to your room, and take off your bonnet?”

Hope gladly assenting, Anne turned without another word, and marched off with the same business-like air with which she had marched in.

The room she led her to was a very pleasant one. The house was built in the form of two sides of a square. The front-door side faced the east, and the other the south.

Hope's room was in this part, and when she entered it the sun was shining brightly and cheerily in through two good-sized windows.

As the main street of Seaborough ran nearly from north to south, it might have been feared that nothing except the ugly buildings of the town would be seen from these windows. But this was not the case; the house standing so far back from the road as to look behind the other houses, and command a fine view of the varied country beyond.

Hope having ascertained this, and being cheered by the bright sunshine, turned with more hopefulness to take a detailed survey of her apartment.

It was a good-sized room, and although the furniture was neither so elegant nor luxurious as that of her room at Denham Park, still it was quite sufficient, and very good of its kind.

Besides the usual supply of wardrobes, chests of drawers, toilet-tables, &c., a very comfortable arm-chair stood beside the fireplace, a smaller table was drawn up in front of it, and a nice set of book-shelves hung over the mantelpiece. Altogether, everything looked far more comfortable than Hope had taught herself to expect.

Her box was standing in the middle of the room, and, wishing to get out a pair of shoes, she opened it. She was quite unaccustomed to do anything for herself, even so trifling a thing as this. And as she looked at the unbroken row of clean, nicely folded clothes, she felt somewhat helpless, and wondered how or where she was to begin her search.

Anne had been standing all this time by the toilet table, quite still and silent, like an awkward uncomfortable statue, her dull grey eyes watching every movement with, as Hope fancied, a censorious scrutiny.

Hope wished earnestly she would go away, would sit down, would speak, would do something, anything, except stand there and watch.

But to stand and watch seemed the only occupation she at that moment felt herself called upon to engage in.

"I wonder where my shoes can be," Hope muttered half aloud, "I can't see anything like them."

Thereupon the statue opened its lips, saying abruptly—"I should think not. Who could think of putting shoes above clean linen? Of course they will be at the bottom of the box. But," as Hope recklessly plunged her hand down, and began to toss the things about in



her blind search, "you will crush all your nice clothes. It wouldn't be much trouble to lay them aside as you take them out, and it would save you a great deal of trouble afterwards."

Hope's colour rose, more at the manner than the substance of this speech. She complied with Anne's suggestion ; but, nervous under the continued observation of these watchful eyes, she pulled everything out with heedless precipitation, and thrust them in a disorderly heap into the one drawer Anne had opened.


Again the latter's organs of neatness and order were offended, and again she interfered.

"You'll never be able to find anything you want if you leave everything topsy-turvy," she said. "And surely you do not keep your stockings and handkerchiefs beside your larger things. See, these three little drawers are made expressly to hold the smaller articles."

Rendered desperate by such repeated rebukes, uttered, as she fancied, in a most dictatorial tone, Hope silently seized upon a bundle of the offending handkerchiefs, unfolding half of them as she did so, and was going to push them into the little drawer, when Anne took them from her.

"I see you are not used to this kind of thing," she said, in her quiet changeless voice ; "if you sit down and unlace your boots, I'll put away your things and find your shoes."

Glad enough to be saved from further blunders, but indignant at the fancied taunt in the words, "you are not used to this kind of thing," Hope obeyed in silence,



and Anne set about arranging her clothes with expeditious skill and nicety.

Just as the shoes had been found and put on, Mrs. Campbell came in.

"Ah, that is right, Anne, dear," she said in her blithe pleasant voice. "You can put everything in order ; and do you, my poor child," to Hope, "come down stairs, and get some luncheon to warm you. Your hands are as cold as a stone."

Hope most gladly complied, and they went down to the dining-room.

When they entered it, Hope no longer felt any surprise at its being preferred to the more showy drawing-room.

Like the latter it was very long, but being in the same part of the house as Hope's bedroom, its three windows looked to the south upon a little strip of shrubbery which led from the front to the back of the house, and a large bow-window at the west end projected out into the prettiest part of a very picturesque old garden.

From the large size of the room, there was ample space for two different styles of furniture. Near the door stood the handsome sideboard, the large round dining-table, and the common black horse-hair chairs ; while grouped round the fire were a smaller table, several different kinds of easy chairs, and a most luxurious sofa.

Hope was immediately installed upon the latter, and while Mrs. Campbell brought forward a small table, a servant came in with a tray bearing a basin of most excellent soup, and two or three slices of thin, remarkably well toasted bread.

Hope had been for some time conscious of feeling very tired and cold, but she had not known how hungry she was until she began to eat. She enjoyed her little repast very heartily, and certainly none the less so, for having remarked the fineness of the damask napkin which covered the tray, the massiveness of the silver spoon, the elegance of the equally valuable pepper-box, and of the solid silver feet supporting the old-fashioned little salt-cellar.

When Mrs. Campbell saw how well she relished her luncheon, she wished her to take some more solid food, but upon Hope's declining, she did not tease her with a too solicitous hospitality. She made her lie down, covered her feet with a warm eider down quilt, and then, bringing forward a large basket of work, she told her, that she might either talk or sleep as she felt inclined, that no one would come in to disturb them, and that as she had work to do she should sit quietly beside her.

Hope had now a better opportunity of studying her step-mother's appearance, as she sat busily sewing. And certainly the result of such study was far from unpleasing.

Mrs. Campbell was a very comely woman. Her figure was perhaps a little too plump for perfect elegance, but so erect and neat, and all her movements so active, that one soon forgot to remark this defect, if, indeed, defect it could be called.

With her fine features, clear complexion, ruddy lips, full bright brown eyes, straight well-marked eye-brows, and rich glossy hair, Hope thought her a most remarkable contrast to her daughter Anne. And as she sat beside the sofa, her face wearing such a cheerful kindly

expression, and her well-formed, though perhaps rather large hand moving so blithely backwards and forwards with her busy needle, Hope liked her looks better and better.

The whole household was now as still and quiet as if hurry and bustle were things quite unknown within its precincts. Nothing was heard except the pleasant chirp of the robins in the shrubbery, and the monotonous click of Mrs. Campbell's needle.

Hope felt that it was particularly pleasant to lie back in her luxurious warm corner, in dreamy idleness, not speaking, scarcely even thinking, distinctly conscious of nothing except the sensation of perfect rest and quiet. Gradually even this consciousness became dreamy too, Mrs. Campbell's substantial figure began to fade away, then came the more vivid colouring, and more distinct sounds of dreams. Hope was most soundly and comfortably asleep.

She slept for more than an hour. A distant noise awoke her, and just as she was struggling back to recollection of her present position, the door opened, and the youngest of her two little sisters ran in. Mrs. Campbell turned hastily round to motion her away, and Hope was amused to see a bony hand and long thin arm, belonging, she felt sure, to Anne Drummond, thrust ghost-like in at the half-opened door, making a vain grasp at the little run-away, while the child herself stood in the middle of the room, with very wide open eyes, arrested by the apparition of the stranger sister, whose presence she had apparently forgotten.

Hope sat up on the sofa, and held out her hand to the little intruder, saying, that she had not spoken to her before, and assuring her in her most winning manner that she was not to blame for awakening her.

"Go and speak to your sister, Susan," said Mrs. Campbell.

Susan obeyed, and even submitted with philosophical resolution to be kissed. But when Hope attempted to lift her up on her knee, she slipped away from her, and took refuge at her mother's side, with hanging down head, and startled, almost tearful eyes.

Hope felt hurt and mortified. She was quite unaccustomed to children, and did not at all understand them. In her pictures of her home-coming, she had supposed that her little brothers and sisters might at first be afraid of her, and look shyly on her as a stranger. But all this fear was to be at once dispelled by the sunshine of her smiles and gracious words, and she had no patience for any awkward feelings which could withstand her fascinations for more than a few minutes.

By this time Anne and Fanny had followed Susan into the room. They were all dressed for going out, and Mrs. Campbell asked where they were going.

"To Braehead, to give grandmamma's message to Sandy."

"O yes, true. I had forgotten. But you always remember everything, Anne," Mrs. Campbell said, smiling. "Well, away with you, and let Hope finish her sleep."

Hope, however, declared that her sleep was quite

over, that she felt quite rested. And with the restlessness which every one must have experienced, who has ever arrived, in the middle of the day, at the end of a long journey, she expressed a wish to join the walkers.

"Not to Braehead, my dear. That would be much too long a walk for you," Mrs. Campbell said decidedly. "But, Anne, if Hope really wishes for a walk, you might send Janet with the children to give Sandy his message, and go with her just as far as she feels inclined."

Anne's quiet assent was drowned in the outcries of the two little girls. Anne had promised to go with them, and they did not care to go with Janet.

Hope's dislike to the proposition was quite as strong as theirs. With them to talk to and to amuse her, she had thought that a walk with that stupid disagreeable Anne might be only a little better than spending the whole afternoon in tiresome idleness at home. But a tête-à-tête with her would be intolerable.

"Oh, by no means," she said eagerly; "I should be very sorry that"—she hesitated. She felt that the formal title of Miss Drummond would be offensive to her step-mother's ears, and she could not bring herself to use the more familiar name. She changed the form of her sentence, and concluded with, "I should be sorry that any promise should be broken on my account. My desire for a walk was a mere whim. I can quite well stay at home."

"Not at all, my dear, if you can be contented with an old woman for your companion," Mrs. Campbell said

good-humouredly—"I am quite ready to go with you when you like;" and she began at once to fold up her work, adding, after a moment's thought, "perhaps, after all, it is better as it is. If you are able for it, I think you should go and see your grandmamma, and I shall like to go with you myself in your first visit."

Hope readily consented. Her grandmother had borne a prominent part in all her visions of conquest. She knew that she was a somewhat peculiar old lady, and not very good-tempered. But in her dreams she had not found it very difficult to win her affection by an unexampled meekness and humble dutifulness, and had enjoyed a certain satisfaction in feeling herself a favourite with one whom few could please. She was quite ready to turn these dreams into reality, and it was settled that after a short walk they should call upon the old lady before returning home to dinner.

In the meantime Anne had disappeared, and presently returned, bearing Hope's out-of-door apparel.

"Ah, that's right," Mrs. Campbell said heartily. "You think of everything, Anne. This poor tired child is well spared the trouble of going up stairs."

Hope, of course, thanked Anne, but with the feeling that she did not like to owe her the gratitude due even to so small a favour as this,—a feeling which was greatly increased by Anne's remarking upon the thin soles of Hope's boots, and pronouncing that they would never do for country roads.

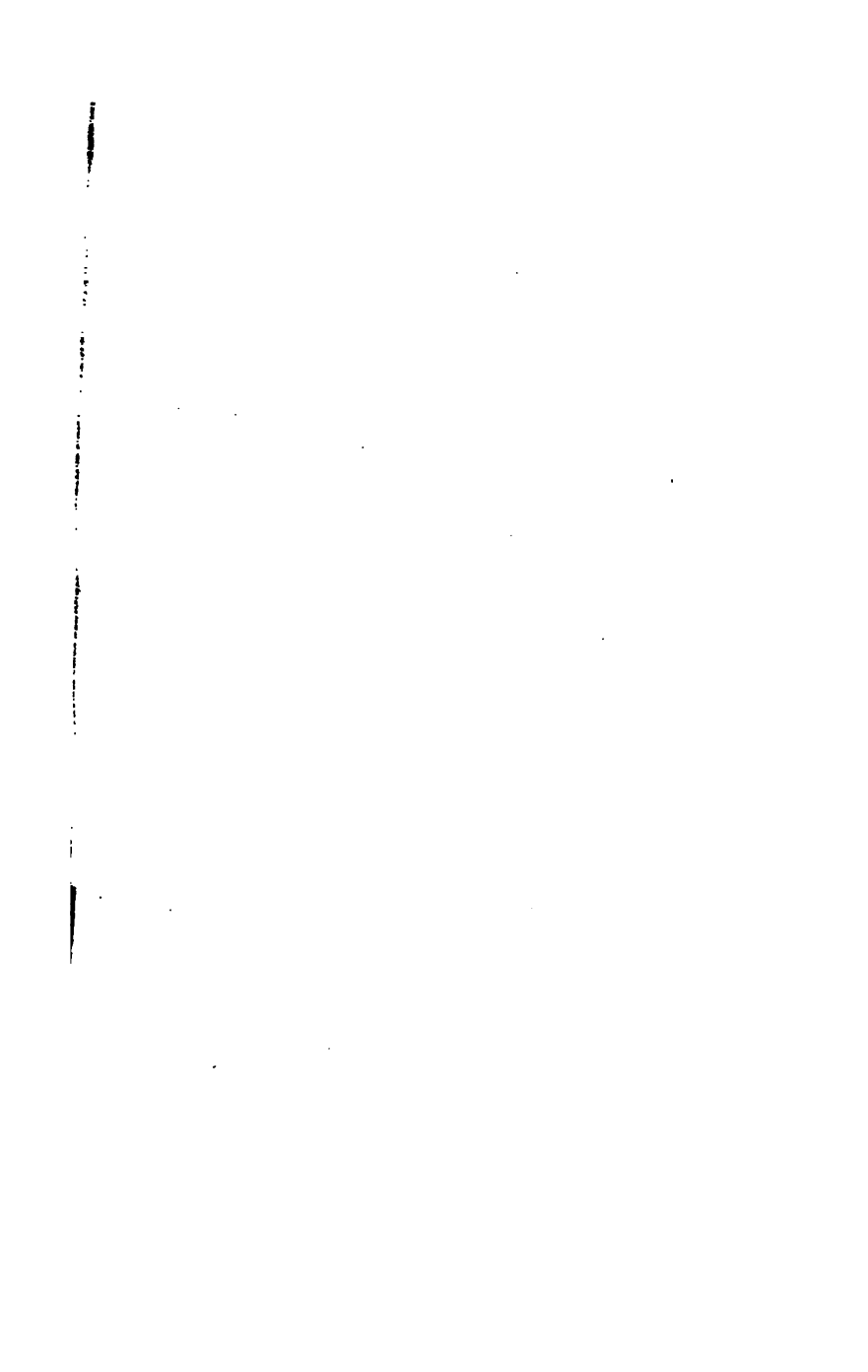
"As if she had any business with my boots or their soles," Hope muttered as she laced them. "I don't







Hope's walk to her Grandmother's.





the least care whether they are thick or thin, but I don't see what right she has to find fault."

When they went out of the gate, Mrs. Campbell turned towards the sea, saying, that she must show Hope their pretty links.

The links consisted of a wide tract of ground stretching along the sea-shore, full of pretty heights and hollows, and covered with a short springy grass, particularly pleasant to walk upon.

Very pleasant and very pretty Hope thought them in this bright afternoon, with the sun pouring its full cheerful light upon sea, grass, sand, and rocks. She would fain have lingered there, but Mrs. Campbell pronounced the north wind to be too sharp for one unaccustomed to it, and led the way to a nice sheltered lane, which went straight up a steep hill towards some of the prettiest parts of the surrounding country.

Anne and the children were before them in the same road, and Hope was amused by watching the former's steady marching step as she plodded straight on, while the children flitted round her, now before, and now behind, and now darting across the road in wild and joyous play. Hope thought she could quite picture the immovable quiet stupidity of Anne's face, and she congratulated herself heartily upon having escaped such a tiresome companion.

She found reason for self-congratulation in the one she had secured, as well as in the one she had missed. Mrs. Campbell proved a most agreeable and accommodating companion, equally ready to talk and to listen,

to give what information Hope might ask for, and to attend to any she might choose to give her. Without asking a single question which could be attributed to an intrusive curiosity, she yet showed so much interest in all that was said about Denham Park and its inhabitants, that Hope was led on to converse more and more freely about them.

Mrs. Denham herself could not as yet be spoken of, but Dr. and Mrs. Markham were fully described, and all their kindness dwelt upon, and Lucy's various perfections detailed with warm enthusiasm. The place, too, came in for its share of attention, and the various beauties of house, park, gardens, hot-houses, green-houses, and conservatory, were all enumerated and praised.

Hope would have been very indignant had any one charged her with feeling proud of all this outward grandeur, or with being anxious to convey a distinct impression of it to the mind of her listener. But such, nevertheless, was the case. Mrs. Campbell saw that it was so, but she neither condemned nor despised Hope on account of it.

She fully realized the great difference between her present and past position, and never expected that she should bear the deprivations such a change implied, with the philosophy an older person might have practised. She was a little amused, it is true, at Hope's great anxiety to make her fully understand, that the pony phaeton in which they drove about the neighbourhood was quite distinct from the barouche used in their longer rounds, while it, in its turn, must be distinguished

from the close chariot, which came into play in colder weather ; that the green-house, where the geraniums, &c., displayed their beauties, must not be confounded with the other house devoted to the cacti and their heat-loving brethren ; or that the dining-room, breakfast-room, library, and drawing-room, were all quite distinct apartments. But she thought it natural that the young girl should wish to convey a vivid impression of these things to the minds of those who never had seen, and never could see her enjoying all the dignity and grandeur of her three carriages, numerous gardeners, and half a dozen reception-rooms.

She encouraged her to talk upon the subject as long as she felt inclined, hoping, that when once it had been thoroughly discussed she might the sooner forget it, and the sooner cease to pine for all the magnificence she had lost.

Their walk was not a very long one, as Mrs. Campbell feared that Hope might be fatigued. They went only so far up the hill as to get a good view of the sea, and then turned into another lane, which led them round by the back of the town to old Mrs. Campbell's house.

It was in the middle of the town, but not in the main street. It stood in a little court with eight or ten other houses, which, like itself, had once been the most aristocratic of the place.

Perhaps the recollection of all the grandeur she had been describing made Hope more sensible of the mean, contracted look of her grandmother's habitation. She certainly looked upon it with considerable disgust and

contempt ; and no one could have called it either attractive or cheerful.

The ten houses were ranged in a row on the north side of the little court, having a square plot of grass enclosed within tall iron railings, opposite to them. They were all very high for their breadth, and had a spare pinched look about them, as if their original proprietors had been anxious to attain the dignity of a three-story house, at the smallest possible expense of stone and lime.

The steep narrow steps, the high narrow doors and windows, all had the same air. And Hope thought the elderly female servant, who opened the door at her grandmother's, had been formed upon precisely the same model.

She was very tall and thin, and her dress, although scrupulously neat and clean, seemed to have been made with the greatest possible economy of materials. In the skirt and sleeves of her dark cotton gown, even in the white apron and white handkerchief, which alone relieved the sombreness of her dress, one could fancy that there was only half the quantity of stuff that any other person would have taken for the purpose.

She had a long thin face, and a pair of piercing black eyes, which she fastened upon Hope the moment the door was opened.

"How is your mistress to-day, Hannah?" Mrs. Campbell asked, her full cheery voice sounding strangely in that grim-looking place.

"Well, ma'am, she is just as cross as two sticks," Hannah answered, speaking very deliberately, and with

the air of having ascertained to a mathematical nicety the exact degree of crossness the two compared articles possessed. "That will be Miss Hope, I'm thinking," looking at her as if she would have read her every thought; and Mrs. Campbell having assented, she, greatly to Hope's surprise, held out her hand, saying, "You're welcome to Seaborough, my dear."

Hope with considerable coolness placed her hand in hers with a scarcely audible "thank you." The keen eyes looked still more intent than before for a single instant, then with a kind of dissatisfied nod of the head, and a "humph," she turned to Mrs. Campbell.

"Yes, ma'am, I assure you she is just past bearing to-day. Some chattering body came and told her that Miss Hope had been seen driving up the street soon after twelve, and since then, just as if she expected the poor lassie was to run here before she had well set her foot in her own father's house, she has been maundering on about the sins of the young and the goodness of the old, till she has just put herself past all bounds. But step in, ma'am, step in," opening the door wider, "you'll have to see her any way, cankered though she be."

They went in, Mrs. Campbell's bright face bearing an unusual look of vexation. As Hannah closed the door behind them, she said to Hope—

"Haud up your heart, my dear, and never mind her scolding. Words break no bones, you know, and it would have been the same thing whatever you had done. She'll be pleased just when she likes, and at no other time, let folks do as they may."



Mrs. Campbell looked at Hope with an expression of kindly anxiety, as if she thought that the old woman's mode of consolation was not the most judicious in the world, but she had no time to attempt giving any better. And Hope followed with a sinking heart along the narrow passage into the room, the door of which Hannah had flung open.

The lobby, passage, and staircase all wore the same pinched, spare aspect, and so did the room and its furniture. Hope thought that such a collection of small, long-legged chairs, tables, and sofas, with such scanty supply of drapery, could be found in no other part of the civilized world. The very window curtains hung in such straight narrow folds, that one could not help wondering whether they could ever meet across the windows.

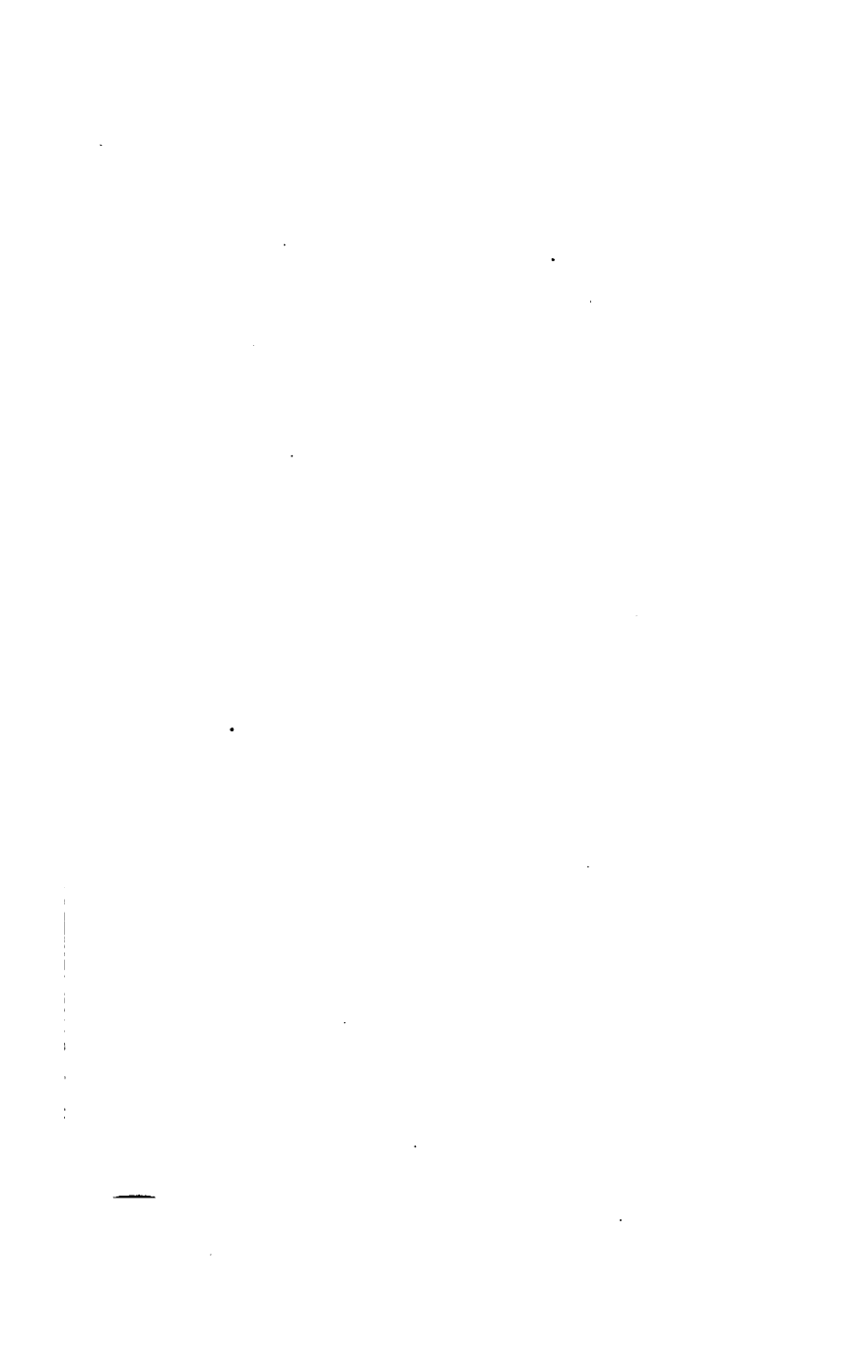
The only thing of which there seemed to be no stint was coals. A most extravagantly hot fire blazed in the grate ; and as the sun was pouring in at the unshaded windows, the room felt intolerably close.

The old lady was sitting upon a sofa close to the fire, very erect and stately, her eyes fixed upon them as they came up the room, but without giving them the smallest word of greeting.

Hope thought her very like her father, but what was a manly decision and firmness in the expression of his face, became hardness and obstinacy in hers.

When they had quite reached the place where she sat, she rose with a cold stiff air, and held out her hand to Hope, saying in a harsh voice—







Hope's arrival at her Grandmother's.



"Hope Campbell, I suppose?"

"Yes," said Mrs. Campbell, making way for Hope, and adding apologetically, "We should have been here sooner, but the poor child was so tired with her long journey, that I was glad to make her rest for a little."

"Tired, indeed! Long journey, forsooth! What long journey?" the old lady said sharply; "I wonder what young folk are made of now-a-days. I had thought, Susan, that you had more sense than to put such nonsense into her head. Tired, indeed! What was there to tire her? Stand round, and let me see what like you are," turning the trembling Hope round, with one jerk of her strong hard hand, so as to make the light fall full on her face.

"You're not a bit of a Campbell," she said after a full minute's keen scrutiny, letting fall, or rather throwing from her Hope's hand, as if it were an unpardonable crime not to resemble that illustrious house.

Glad to be released, Hope was moving away to seek a seat as much as possible out of the influence of the overpoweringly hot fire, when the old lady turned round upon her, saying sharply—

"Where are you creeping to, as if you were ashamed to be seen? Sit down there, and let me look at you," pointing to a chair opposite to her own seat, and as close to the fire as it could stand.

Hope obeyed in silence; and her grandmother, having ordered rather than invited her daughter-in-law to sit down beside her on the sofa, began to expend some of her ill-humour upon her.

"Where is Anne?" she asked. "Why did you not bring her with you?"

Mrs. Campbell said she had gone out with the children.

"Gone out with the children, indeed! And could none of your idle, gossiping maids find time to go out with the children? I tell you, Susan, you make that poor girl a perfect slave."

Mrs. Campbell took no notice of the charge, but only asked her mother-in-law if she had wished to see Anne.

"Not I, truly. I never wish to see any one that does not wish to see me. But if she had been here, she might perhaps have put my knitting to rights."

"Perhaps I can do that," the other said good-humouredly, taking up the work which lay beside her on the sofa.

"Not you. Now, just lay it down, Susan. You know nothing about it. Nobody does but Anne, and you never give her a moment's time or peace to come near me," was the ungracious reply.

Again Mrs. Campbell quietly avoided answering the accusation, by asking the old lady whether Dr. Campbell had been to see her yet.

It was an unfortunate question, and opened the way to a whole torrent of complaint of her son, and of every member of the family. No one paid her any attention, or cared to know whether she was dead or alive, she said. But one comfort was, that she never expected anything else, and so was not disappointed.

The younger lady in vain endeavoured to pacify her

by representing the urgency of the call to the Castle. She was only answered by assurances, that the whole affair was easily understood. Of course, your Sir Charles Grants, and all your grand people, were of far more importance than poor, old, useless mothers. She did not wish for any excuse. It was quite natural that people should go last to the places they least cared to go to, and so on.

When she was tired of abusing her son, she turned again to her grand-daughter.

"Well, Miss Hope," with an ill-natured emphasis upon the Miss, "so you have left your grand friends at last, and condescended to come home to your father's house. But where is the lassie going to?" she added angrily, as Hope rose from her seat, and made a staggering kind of step forward.

The younger Mrs. Campbell rose at the same moment, and springing hastily to her step-daughter's side, was only in time to save her from falling. She had fainted.

Hope had been all her life easily overcome by heat. And at this time, worn out with the fatigue of her journey, and all the excitement and agitation of the day, she had little strength to oppose to its effects upon her. She had not sat many minutes beside the blazing fire, before she felt herself getting sick and giddy. She tried to move back her chair, but its feet were entangled in the hearth-rug, and her fast failing strength was insufficient to overcome the obstacle. Afraid of drawing down some angry remark from her stern grandmother, she had not ventured to rise and leave her uncomfortable position until it was, as we have seen, too late.



This fainting fit had a singular effect upon the old lady. At first she began to exclaim, and question in her usual domineering tone. But when she caught sight of the girl's pale, lifeless-looking face, the expression of her own suddenly changed. She looked frightened for a minute or so—more than frightened, terrified. As she leant over the table, and gazed upon Hope's prostrate figure, her features worked convulsively, and her countenance was blanched with agitation. It was only for a minute. She sat down again presently, and turned her head resolutely away, as if determined not to look again.

In the meantime, her daughter-in-law was exercising all her usual promptitude and self-possession. She laid Hope gently down on the floor, untied the strings of her bonnet, and loosened the fastenings of her cloak, and then ran to summon Hannah to her aid.

A most efficient help the sturdy old servant was. Without wasting a moment in idle questions or exclamations, she raised Hope at once in her arms, and carried her into the cooler atmosphere of a small front room, whose window was open.

The faint was a long one. Hope had been stretched upon the floor of this room, and the ordinary remedies had been applied for some minutes, before the least sign of consciousness returned.

The first object that met her eyes, when she at last opened them, was the kind motherly face of Mrs. Campbell bending over her ; the first sound she heard was her pleasant voice asking anxiously if she felt better. But Hope was still too weak and confused to speak. She

closed her eyes again, and lay for some minutes in a kind of dream, not even able to wonder about what had happened.

Presently her attention was aroused by Hannah's saying—

“Did you see the old lady's look as we carried her out? It's my belief she thought that she was dead.”

“Poor old lady,” was Mrs. Campbell's answer, while she was busily chafing Hope's cold hands, “you should go and tell her that she is coming round.”

“Not I, indeed; a good fright would do her no harm, and is only what she deserves. Mind how she treated the poor mother. Take my word for it, that was in her own thoughts at that moment. I believe,” with a kind of chuckle, “she thought it was a judgment upon her, that brought the poor dear's bairn to die in her sight.”

“Her colour is coming back, and her pulse is getting stronger,” Mrs. Campbell said, apparently anxious to silence the servant's speculations; but Hannah went on,—

“She has never named the poor lamb from the day she left this house. But for weeks after she heard of her death, I've seen her look round quite scared like, as if she thought to see the sweet bit sorrowful face come back from the other world to reproach her. Ah! the life she led that poor, dear angel.”

“Poor Fanny, poor Fanny,” Mrs. Campbell said in tones so full of love and pity as at once startled Hope out of her half-conscious state. It was her mother's name, and she looked up eagerly and inquiringly into

the speaker's face, as if to ask what interest she could have had in that mother.

"You are better now, are you not?" Mrs. Campbell said cheerfully, as she helped her to rise into a sitting posture. "Much better, I am sure. Take this wine that Hannah is pouring out for you, while I go to tell your grandmamma that you are better, and then we shall see about getting you home to rest. You have been doing a great deal too much to-day."

She left the room, and Hannah helped Hope to reach a chair, and while she drank the glass of wine, the old woman sat down on the ground and applied herself to rubbing her feet and ankles, which she pronounced to be still too cold.

"You looked very like your mother when you were fainting," she said, looking up at her with a kindly sort of anxiety.

"Did you know mamma?" Hope asked eagerly.

"Know her! To be sure I did. I was in this house twenty year, or nigh hand it, before ever she set foot within it, poor, dear lamb."

"And you think me like her?" Hope pursued, anxious to hear more.

"Something, but not very," was the answer, after a long keen look. "Master Ernest—God bless his bonny face—is more like than you are. You've more pith into you than ever she had, but no so much sweetness."

A little mortified at the last clause of the speech, and anxious to convince her that she was mistaken, Hope

called up a most gracious condescending smile. The keen-sighted old woman understood her at once, and said quickly—

“ Oh, you want to make me think that you can be sweet too. But that is quite different from your mother’s sweetness. She was good and gentle like a dove, just because she was, not because she tried to be, or to make folk think her so ;—poor, dear lamb. But she is an angel now, and happy at last.”

Their conversation was interrupted by Mrs. Campbell’s return. She brought with her Hope’s bonnet and cloak, and told her, that she had made her excuses to her grandmother, as she wished to get her home as quickly and quietly as possible.

“ And your grandmamma got such a shock with your fall,” she said, “ that, I think, she would rather not see you again until you have got a little more colour in your cheeks.”

“ It is my belief she would rather never set eyes upon her again in this world,” said Hannah ; “ she puts her too much in mind of things that have been done and said, and can never be recalled.”

“ Hush, hush, Hannah,” Mrs. Campbell said decidedly,—a rebuke which the self-willed old servant would have resented as a liberty from any other person, but which, coming from such a favourite as Mrs. Campbell, was not only submitted to, but had even the unexpected result of making her silent for that time at least.

She remained with them, and helped Hope to put

on her things, and even condescended to open the door for them when they went away.

Mrs. Campbell had asked Hope if she thought she could walk with the help of her strong arm, or if she should not like her to go home and see if Dr. Campbell had returned, and could send the carriage for her. And Hope, evidently afraid to remain in that grim house without her step-mother's protection, had eagerly declared herself quite able to walk. So they set out together, and although Hope's knees shook a little, and she felt weak and wearied, still with the support of such a substantial, and, at the same time, such a kind encouraging companion, she got on very well.

As they were leaving the door, Hannah called after them to tell Mrs. Campbell to make the Doctor come and see his mother as soon as he could.

"He is the only person in the world that can put her in a good key," she said ; "so be sure you bid him come before dinner."

Mrs. Campbell only nodded and smiled.

"What a strange woman that is," said Hope as they walked away.

"And as disagreeable as strange, do you think?" Mrs. Campbell asked.

Hope hesitated. Her dignity had been repeatedly wounded by Hannah's free and easy manner during their short intercourse together ; but yet she could not help feeling grateful for a certain rough kindness shewn towards herself, as well as for the tenderness of feeling evidently entertained for her mother.

"Not altogether pleasant," she said, "but not so much positively disagreeable as just very strange. I never saw any one the least like her."

"No, I daresay not, my dear. And people, who have lived much longer in the world than you have, might say the same thing. She is not a common character. With a strong mind, strong will, and not too gentle a temper, she is yet capable of deep affection, and is, besides, a most honest and faithful servant. She is your grandmamma's only one, and serves her most admirably."

"And yet she does not seem to care much for her."

"Oh, she does care for her. But it is an odd kind of caring, resulting almost entirely from habit, association, and a certain feeling of proprietorship. She looks upon herself as belonging to Mrs. Campbell, and Mrs. Campbell to her. Although she sees her faults very clearly, and comments upon them very freely, she does not like any one else to do so. And although she constantly asserts, and with too much reason, that it is impossible to please her mistress, she yet spares no pains to make her comfortable. Your grandmamma's solitary dinner is as exquisitely cooked and served as if the greatest people of the land were going to partake of it. Even the message to your father, disrespectfully as it was worded, was dictated by a real desire for her lady's comfort."

"Perhaps she might wish to get her put into a good humour for her own sake," Hope suggested, smiling.

"Ah, you don't understand Hannah, that is clear,"

Mrs. Campbell answered. "The old lady's fits of ill temper are matters of perfect indifference to her. Mrs. Campbell very seldom scolds Hannah ; but I have heard her call her an obstinate old fool, and Hannah's answer was the quietest, calmest possible, 'Very well, ma'am, just as you please ; if it's a pleasure to you to think me so, I'm sure I don't care.' "

"And Hannah never loses her temper ?"


"Never. I don't believe any one ever saw her in a passion. She is too resolute and decided a character for that. Her temper is stern and uncompromising, but not irritable."

Hope fell into a reverie upon the characteristics thus described, tracing them out in all their ramifications, and imagining the various ways in which they might manifest themselves in various circumstances. This was an exercise she was fond of, and skilful in ; but the misfortune was, that in real life she constantly forgot the conclusions she had arrived at in her theoretical speculations, and which, if remembered, might have made her more willing and ready to excuse offences, and to make allowance for faults.

Her present meditations lasted until they arrived at home. The immediate result was, to make her feel a certain kind of respect for, and interest in Hannah. But the next time that the latter's blunt, independent mode of speaking encroached upon the young lady's sense of dignity, patience was as far to seek, as if no light had ever been thrown upon the peculiarities of character which had thus manifested themselves.

## CHAPTER V.

### HOPE'S MOTHER.

T was past four by the time they reached home ; and when Hope returned to the dining-room after changing her dress, she found her three brothers returned from school, and eagerly pouring into their mother's ear the story of their day's adventures.

They were handsome, healthy-looking boys, of ages between twelve and nine. Blunt in manner, and very boyish they were, yet less shy and awkward than the little girls.

Ronald, the eldest, came forward very frankly to speak to Hope, and Alexander and Jamie, with only a moment's bashful hesitation, followed his example. And when Mrs. Campbell advised Hope to lie down on the sofa, Ronald, with an air of boyish gallantry, ran forward to take up his satchel of books, which were in her way, and stood with the quilt in his hand until she was comfortably settled, that he might spread it over her feet.

They did not, however, show any very overpowering interest in her, or any very vehement desire for her conversation. Their whole minds were full of all the various



particulars they had to give their mother about their gaining and losing of places, and about the sayings of this boy, and the doings of that one.

"And what is your place, Jamie?" Mrs. Campbell asked, in the first cessation of the three tongues. Her needle was plying as busily as before, and she listened to all they had to say, with her usual good-humoured and kindly interest, but without relaxing in her diligence for a single instant.

"Fourteen," was the short reply, while Jamie looked away with a very red face, and a smile half-roguish, half-ashamed.

"Oh, Jamie, Jamie, you idle boy! Why, that is booby, is it not?"

"Yes, to be sure," said Alexander, readily. "There are only fourteen boys in the class. He could not say a word of his meanings."

"How do you know?" Jamie asked angrily.

"Johnnie Wallace told me."

"Johnnie Wallace might just as well have left it alone, then. He said his geography quite as ill as I said my meanings."

"Well, well, never mind Johnnie Wallace," interposed Mrs. Campbell's pleasant voice. "What he says can make you neither better nor worse; but, Jamie, why did you not know your meanings? I am sure Anne took great pains to teach you."

"Oh, he did not read them over again when Anne told him," said Ronald. "Anne would say that he quite deserved to be booby."

"No, she would not," Jamie retorted vehemently ; "she never says unkind things when the mischief is done, and can't be helped."

Ronald seemed rather inclined to continue the dispute, but the peace-making mamma again interposed, and, telling the boys that Anne would most probably spend the evening at their grandmamma's, advised them to look over their lessons at once, that they might know what assistance they should require from her before she went out.

The next day was Saturday, however, and in spite of being reminded that they had an engagement for that day, they could not be persuaded not to leave their lessons until the next morning. But when Mrs. Campbell peremptorily ordered them out of the room, that Hope might be left quiet, they sallied forth to meet Anne, and get her sympathy in the successes and failures of the day.

Hope had now seen all the members of the family who were at home. Her own brother Ernest was still on the Continent, and Mrs. Campbell's eldest daughter, Julia, was with her grandmother, Mrs. Maitland, paying visits to friends in the south of England.

Hope's fainting fit proved a source of real gratification to her, by making her a person of great importance during the rest of the evening.

As soon as her father heard of it, he came to see her, felt her pulse, looked with concern at her pale cheeks and languid eyes, and questioned her anxiously as to her liability to such attacks. As Hope sat next him at dinner, she could see that he was constantly watching

her ; and whenever it was over, he advised her to lie down again on the sofa, went with her himself to see her comfortably settled, and to draw the curtain of the window nearest to her, lest she might feel any draught of cold air from it.

When tea was brought in, he was the first to suggest that she should lie still, and he sent one of the boys up stairs to bring down a small table of peculiar construction, which could be made to project over the sofa and hold her cup.

All these attentions, besides the present pleasure they afforded her, were of real service to Hope, by giving her a more correct impression of her father's character than she had previously entertained. He was so quiet, grave, and undemonstrative in manner, so different from any one she had ever associated with, that she had supposed him to be cold and indifferent. That he could be kind and considerate, she had had good experience both at Denham Park and during their journey ; but his present anxiety spoke of a feeling of affection above and beyond mere kindness, and were proportionably more precious to his daughter's heart.

Altogether, the afternoon and evening passed far more pleasantly than Hope had anticipated.

In the visionary home she had been contemplating for the last few days, she had chosen to fancy all kinds of disorder and mismanagement. She had, with wonderful ingenuity, gone into all the details of many a scene of domestic discomfort, which she had borne with most praiseworthy patience, and she had partaken with exem-

plary contentment of many an imaginary repast, where cooking and attendance were equally bad, and where the noisy clamour, the disagreeable habits, and rude ways of ill-taught children, had made that contentment so difficult of attainment, as that any one but herself must have given it up in despair.

Very different from all this was the reality. The dinner was plain and simple enough, but everything was the best of its kind, and admirably cooked. The neat, active maid-servant who waited on them was as attentive, quiet, and orderly as the best-trained butler could have been ; and the three boys—the girls had dined in the forenoon—conducted themselves with perfect propriety. Accustomed, even from infancy, to take all their meals in the presence of their mother and elder sisters, they had never been suffered to acquire any of those awkward habits and rude ways which children too often learn in the nursery. And they shewed as little impatience to be helped, as much polite attention to the wants of others, and handled their knives and forks as properly as any full-grown gentlemen could have been expected to do.

After tea, when Dr. Campbell went out to visit some patients, Hope and her step-mother were left alone. As the latter had foreseen, Dr. Campbell had been the bearer of a message from his mother to Anne, begging her to spend the evening with her—an invitation with which she at once complied. And the five children went off to a distant apartment, where they might pursue their noisy plays without rebuke.

Hope was very glad of the quiet this arrangement afforded, and she was also glad to have an opportunity of conversing with Mrs. Campbell alone. She was desirous to obtain information about her mother's residence at Seaborough, but she found considerable difficulty in beginning upon the subject. She had so long accustomed herself to look upon the present Mrs. Campbell as a kind of intruder into her own mother's place, that she felt an awkwardness in naming that mother to her.

While she was pondering over this matter, little Fanny came in as ambassador from the others, to beg for some china bowls, which were locked up in one of Mrs. Campbell's presses. As she was leaving the room laden with her heavy basket, her mother called after her to remind her that the bowls must be counted when they were put away, lest any should be left straying about the floor. The sound of her name suggested a new idea to Hope's mind, and she said abruptly—

“Fanny! That was mamma's name.”

“Yes, my dear. Your father and I were anxious to keep up a name very precious to us,” Mrs. Campbell answered in a grave softened tone.

“You knew mamma, then?”

“Very intimately during the year she lived here. All my life has been passed in this neighbourhood, except four years when I lived in Edinburgh,” and a shade passed over her sunny face, as she thought of that brief period of her first marriage. “My mother and your grandmother are very old friends. They were

left widows about the same time, and each with an only child very near the same age. Similarity of circumstances drew them still more closely together, and there has always been a great intimacy between the two families. Your mother, from the very first, took a fancy to me, and I—I loved her as a precious younger sister. But who ever knew her without loving her dearly!"

"I should like to know about her," Hope said timidly.

"My poor child," and Mrs. Campbell laid her hand tenderly upon Hope's, adding, after a moment's pause, while those good truthful eyes of hers shone in moisture, "it is a heavy trial, dear, to know one's own mother only by the report of others."

Hope burst into tears. Mrs. Campbell allowed her to cry without interruption, only keeping her hand with a kindly pressure in one of her own, and stroking it gently and soothingly with the other.

"I am very foolish," Hope said, after a few minutes, trying to smile through her tears.

"If that be to be foolish, my dear, it is a kind of folly we are all the better of," her step-mother said gently. "But I don't know what your papa might say, if he were to come in now and see your red eyes and flushed cheeks. I am afraid he would think I had forgotten his orders to keep you very quiet. I think we must not discuss any agitating subject to-night. When you are rested and strong, I shall be quite glad to tell you anything you like about your mother. I like to speak of her."

"No ; but do tell me now when we are so quiet together. I do so very much wish to know," Hope pleaded earnestly. "When I came out of my fainting fit to-day, I was for a little in a kind of dream, and seemed quite to forget the necessity of speaking or moving ; but I heard what you and Hannah said, and I thought from that, that grandmamma must have been very cruel to dear mamma."

"She did not intend to be cruel, my dear ; but no two people could ever have been worse fitted for getting on well together. Then your grandmamma did not try to like Fanny, because she did not approve of the marriage. She had a prejudice against English people, and besides had had other plans for her son."

She hesitated for a moment, and then continued, looking up with her frank open-hearted expression,— "I don't see any harm in telling you all. Mrs. Campbell had always planned that her son and I should marry. We never thought of it ourselves. We had been too much together as children, looked upon each other too much in a brother and sister light. And, indeed, I had been engaged to marry Mr. Drummond more than six months before your father's marriage. But your grandmamma did not know that, and looking upon that marriage as the only obstacle to her wishes, she was proportionally irritated by it."

"And chose to find consolation under her own disappointment in making poor mamma as miserable as she could," Hope said resentfully.

"Nay, my dear, you must not allow your imagina-

tion to run away with you. You must not suppose that she sat down and planned deliberately how to revenge herself upon your mother. It was only that the disappointment of her hopes made her peculiarly irritable, made her ready to misunderstand and misconstrue your mother's every word and action, and widened the breach which must, under the most favourable circumstances, have subsisted between two such very different characters."

"I should think, indeed, that mamma must have been a very different person from grandmamma," Hope said with a self-satisfied air.

"Certainly she was. She was one of the gentlest, most loving creatures I ever saw. Like some tender, sensitive little floweret, the least touch of coldness was enough to blight her at once. We speak of people who have delicate constitutions. She had that too. But I am sure she had a most delicate heart. An unkind or harsh word or look, was as painful to her as the grossest oppression and cruelty could have been to many a stronger spirit. Like all sensitive people, she was quick to discern the feelings with which she was regarded; and, accustomed as she had been to the utmost love and tenderness from every one around her, to find herself an object of dislike to one with whom she was forced constantly to associate, and whom, as her husband's mother, she naturally desired to please, was indeed a sore trial, under which she sunk at once, and which seemed at once to deprive her of all energy and hope. To all the reproaches and taunts poured forth upon her, she could



only oppose a sorrowful, broken-hearted meekness, more irritating to her mother-in-law than the most spirited opposition could have been, because it must have caused her sundry pangs of self-reproach."

"Poor, poor mamma, how unhappy she must have been!" Hope said, tearfully.

"She was very unhappy, indeed. Her husband was much occupied through the day, so that she had not the support of his presence. After bearing in silent, sad patience with all her companion's ill-humour as long as she could, she would steal up to her own room, to sit there and brood over present sorrow, and to make it look blacker and deeper by contrasting it with past happiness and peace."

"Ah! but surely that was wrong," Hope said eagerly, her judging spirit overcoming for the moment her interest in her mother's sorrow. "That we have been more than ordinarily happy at one time of our lives, ought never to be used as an excuse for murmuring under the reverse. It ought rather to give us strength to bear, by inspiring us with gratitude for what we have once enjoyed."

"True enough, my dear. But when daily and hourly annoyances press thickly upon us, leaving us little time for reflection, and taking from us all present peace, it seems very natural to look back upon a bright past with longing and regret."

"But it would have been so much wiser to have looked rather upon the bright spots in the present. After all, these trials were only what you have called them—annoyances; and while she had the full happiness

of her husband's love, they ought to have seemed mere trifles to her. Surely they were not serious enough to weigh down any one's spirit, or even to make one very unhappy."

"Ah, my dear Hope, it is very easy to make mountains out of our own mole-hills, and, perhaps, the next easiest thing is to make mole-hills of our neighbour's mountains. We cannot tell how far another's trials are heavy or light, unless we have some means of accurately weighing the natural temperament of the sufferer ; and that we can never have."

Hope's colour rose high, as it suddenly occurred to her that there was something unnatural and unseemly, in her companion's being forced to defend the mother against her own daughter's strictures. A keen, quick look from Mrs. Campbell, as Hope gave utterance to her last sententious speech, seemed to imply that the same thought had passed through her mind. And Hope remained silent for some minutes, thinking with vexation upon the bad impression her words might have made upon her step-mother.

When she did speak again, she went back to the subject of Mrs. Campbell's intimacy with her mother, and to her opinion of her.

"I have heard Mrs. Denham often and often describe dear mamma," she said, in a softened tone. "But she had known her from infancy. I should like to know what impression she made upon a stranger."

"From the first day I saw her I took her at once into my heart," Mrs. Campbell said energetically. "She

seemed to me, even on that first day, something too pure and tender for this world. She was a being full of love and gentleness, but so timid and dependent that from the first I felt towards her more as a mother towards her helpless clinging little baby, than as a friend towards a friend. Since I have really known the nature of a mother's love, I have often thought how much there was of its protecting spirit in my love for dear Fanny. One felt inclined to put one's arm round her, and hide her from every sorrow or care."

"I wonder how grandmamma could be harsh to such a creature!" Hope said indignantly.

"Your grandmamma's temper is naturally harsh and stern, and she has had a great deal to try her through life. She is very proud of her own and her husband's ancient family greatness, and yet her poverty has always compelled her to live beneath what she thinks her proper sphere. This has injured her temper, and made her impatient towards every one who does not feel exactly as she does. Feeling discontented and unhappy in her present circumstances, she does not see how little those around her are to blame for that unhappiness; but is constantly fancying, that if they were to act in some way differently from what they do, she should be satisfied. Even to-day, I have no doubt, that the cold wind had made her feel unwell and uncomfortable; but she fancied that if you and your father had called earlier in the day, she should have been quite happy, and she was therefore inclined to resent her unpleasant feelings upon you."

"A very disagreeable kind of person to have anything to do with," Hope said decidedly.

"But still more disagreeable to herself than to any one else," Mrs. Campbell observed in her good-humoured way. "We have to bear with her for only a short time now and then, but she can never get away from herself. I always feel as if we ought to pity her so much as to be quite ready to bear with all her crossness."

"Particularly as we cannot mend the matter, and the less we think about her murmurings and scoldings, the less disagreeable will they be," Hope said very wisely. "For our own sakes as well as for hers, we should teach ourselves to make excuses for her, and we should remember that her failing in her duty can never excuse our failing in ours."

"Very true, my dear," was Mrs. Campbell's hearty response; "I am glad you see the matter in that light. For, to tell the truth, all the patience and forbearance you can muster will be called into exercise in your intercourse with your poor grandmother."

Hope felt herself at that moment capable of any amount of patient endurance, and was even half inclined to envy Anne her present opportunity of exercising such virtues.

It was quite delightful to picture her own gentle meekness under the old lady's taunts and reproaches, the beautiful compassion for her weaknesses, with which she should strengthen herself to meet her capricious ill-humour, and, generously forgetful of the injuries she

might receive, cheerfully give her whole mind to make her grandmamma as happy and comfortable as possible.

And yet, on the following evening, when they all drank tea with old Mrs. Campbell, Hope's spirits sank below zero at the very first rebuff, and never rose again. Through the whole evening she sat in a gloomy silence, brooding over the last bitter speech the old lady had uttered, dwelling upon its injustice, and working herself to a high pitch of indignation and self-pity, until a fresh offence gave her fresh food for meditation.

But I am anticipating. Hope is still lying on the sofa, Mrs. Campbell is still sitting beside her, and they are still talking of that mother Hope had never known, but who was now fast becoming a bond of union between herself and her step-mother.

As Hope listened to the latter's earnest words of praise and affection, as she remarked the softening and trembling of her voice, the pause in the labours of her busy needle, and the frequent rise of tears to her eyes, she felt her heart drawn towards her, and her vague prejudices against her melt gradually away.

"You and mamma must have seen a great deal of each other," she remarked.

"Yes ; I think in all the year she lived in Duke's Court, scarcely a day passed in which we did not meet. My mother was as much interested in, and as fond of her as I was, and she promoted our being together as much as possible. She spent a week with us at Braehead every now and then, and enjoyed herself greatly there. Her spirits were always as easily raised as de-

pressed, and she used to flit about the house and garden like a joyous, uncaged bird, and, as our old gardener used to say, made the very flowers and bushes love her bonny face."

"I am glad that she found some one to love her," Hope said earnestly, and with a look full of gratitude to Mrs. Campbell.

"We were interested in her before she came amongst us," the other continued. "We had always been very fond of your father. During the two or three months when he had given up all hope of ever possessing your mother, he was at home, and my mother and I were his only confidantes. From all he told us then, we were prepared to love her, although I do not think we were prepared to find her so peculiarly loveable as she proved to be. One could scarcely be prepared by description for the irresistible charm there was in her guileless, trusting, loving nature."

"And you were her only intimate friend?"

"In her own rank of life I was. There was no other young person with whom she could very well be intimate. But among her inferiors there were many whose hearts she won as completely as she did ours. When you are able to walk so far, I must take you to see your father's nurse, Rebecca Brown, and you will be surprised to find how clear and fresh is the image of your mother in her heart."

Hope expressed her eager desire to see and know every one who had known and loved her mother.

"It will be a great pleasure to me to show you the

walks we used to take," Mrs. Campbell pursued. "There is a beautiful, quiet lane up the country a little way, where we used to walk for hours ; and she used to tell me all about her former home, and the good friends with whom she had lived. I often used to feel as if I knew your Mrs. Denham as well as if I had passed half my life with her."

"How I wish I had known all this before," Hope exclaimed ; and then she stopped suddenly, and blushed deeply. The prejudice, and almost dislike she had felt towards her step-mother were in her mind when she made that exclamation, and it had been called forth by the sense of how much unhappiness she might have been spared, had she known the real state of the case. She feared that her words might convey to her companion a knowledge of what had given rise to them. But if they did so, they at least gave no pain. Mrs. Campbell looked at Hope with her own peculiarly open, kindly expression, and said frankly and cordially—

"I wish you had, my dear, if it would have been a comfort to you to know it—if it would have made you feel less strange in coming among us. Remember, my dear Hope, that you have a double claim on my love, as my husband's child, and as a kind of keepsake of the friend whom I loved, as I have never loved friend before, or since."

The truthful earnestness of the tone in which this was said, touched Hope deeply—for the moment it banished all her foolish egotistical thoughts and feelings, and made her more natural than she usually was. She took Mrs.

Campbell's hand in both her own, and pressed it warmly, while tears rose to her eyes.

"I have lost two mothers," she said in a low voice. "But, indeed, I will try as much as I can to take you into their place."


"No, don't try anything about it, my dear Hope," Mrs. Campbell said, rising and kissing her affectionately on the forehead. "Take me as I am, and don't think too much about loving me, or any of us. There is a great deal of false feeling in all our planning about how much or how little we can, or ought to love this or that person. Let your heart and affections alone. A taught love, even though it be self-taught, is not worth much. But now I am not going to talk to you any more. It is time for you to go to bed, and I hope papa may see some more colour in your cheeks to-morrow, or he will think me a very bad nurse."





## CHAPTER VI.

### HOPE'S SUPERIORITY.

Y the Monday morning the whole family had gone back to their usual mode of life, as if no interruption had ever occurred, and Hope was left to do in all things exactly as she liked.

Breakfast was early, as the boys had to be at school by nine o'clock. Immediately after breakfast, the whole family dispersed. Anne withdrew with the little girls to the school-room, and Mrs. Campbell was generally occupied during the forenoon with her household matters, letter-writing, and charitable visits among her poor neighbours.

"Shall you be able to amuse yourself, my dear?" Mrs. Campbell asked on the Monday morning after breakfast. "Anne is such a devoted governess, she gives up the whole forenoon to Fanny and Susan. If Julia were at home she would be more companionable for you."

Hope, somewhat proudly, asserted her perfect independence of any companionship. It seemed a kind of degradation to a girl of her attainments and resources to suppose that she could not occupy and amuse herself.

"She intended," she said, "to pursue her studies as

she had been accustomed to do, and with her books could find full occupation for the whole day."

"Well, my dear, that is very right. I don't think girls of your age can well be too diligent. And where should you like to sit? In this room, or in the school-room? If you like to stay here, I don't think you will be much disturbed, as we have very seldom visitors in the forenoon. But if you like the school-room better, it is a pleasant cheerful room, and perhaps Anne and you might be able to give each other help in your various studies."

Anne help her indeed! The idea was too absurd, and in a lofty tone she declared her preference for the dining-room.

I do not know whether Mrs. Campbell remarked the contemptuous manner in which her daughter's assistance was regarded, but at any rate she was quite indifferent to it. She acquiesced in the decision with her usual good-humoured cheerfulness, and when Hope went upstairs to fetch her books, looked round the room with the kind wish of finding out the most comfortable place to establish her in.

She at once fixed upon the bay-window at the end of the room. It was deep enough to form a little room of itself, and, with its pleasant look-out upon the garden, was indeed a very desirable spot.

Beside it was a closet in the wall, conveniently shelved, which Mrs. Campbell resolved to give up to Hope's sole possession. And she began at once, with good-humoured alacrity, to remove the various kinds of property with

which it was filled, and to find other receptacles for them.

To a very orderly housewife as she was, this was no slight sacrifice. But she was not apt, in matters of this kind, to think much of her own loss. And she made herself quite happy with picturing how conveniently Hope's books and boxes would stand upon the shelves, and what a comfort it would be to her to have them all in one place, always at hand, and under lock and key.

When she had quite cleared the closet, and summoned one of the servants to clean it out, her next care was to provide a comfortable chair and convenient table to stand in the recess of the window. The former was easily found among the varieties the room contained. But to procure the other was a more difficult business.

One was too small to be of any use, another was too unsteady to serve as a writing-table, and a third was too large to allow the chair to be so placed as that its occupant could look out at the window.

One at last presented itself to her memory, which was exactly suitable, but which it cost her a pang, a slight pang, to appropriate for such a purpose. It was a beautiful little table, which always stood in the drawing-room, and which had never been degraded to any other post than the honourable one of bearing the prettiest and rarest ornaments and curiosities which the house contained.

It was a favourite piece of furniture with Mrs. Campbell, for the association connected with it, as well as for its own beauty. It had been given to her husband by

a cabinet-maker, who had formerly lived in Seaborough, and who believed that he owed his own and his son's preservation through a dangerous illness to Dr. Campbell's skill and attention.

A gift worthy of such a receiver, could not, in the giver's estimation, have too much thought and labour expended on it. It had not been the work of a day. Innumerable designs had been made before the designer could be satisfied that perfection of beauty and convenience had been attained. One of his sons, a sailor, had been commissioned to seek out and bring home the most rare and beautiful kind of foreign wood that money could procure. Every part of the work had been executed by the master's own hand, and as the result of so much anxious care in material, design, and workmanship, it bore equal testimony to the skill, taste, and gratitude of its maker.

Having resolved to give Hope possession of this treasure, Mrs. Campbell did not allow herself time to reflect upon its various perfections, as it stood in the most conspicuous part of the drawing-room, nor upon the difficulty of filling up the blank its absence would create.

She began at once to despoil it of the various ornaments it had so long proudly borne, and to seek proper accommodation for them elsewhere. It was a work of some difficulty, and occupied a good deal of time. But still it had been successfully accomplished, and the table placed in its new position before Hope came down-stairs with her books.

The indefatigable Anne had unpacked all her boxes

for her, and had arranged their contents in their proper places with so much neatness as that Hope could easily have found all she required.

But as she began to take down one old familiar book after another, such a crowd of recollections and associations rushed over her mind, as quite overwhelmed her. As she stood and gazed upon them, large tears rose to her eyes, and rolled down her cheeks. The present scene was quite forgotten, and she was again in the library at Denham Park. She seemed again to hear the kind voice of her loving teacher, again to see the gentle affectionate smile of her lips.

There was the Dante out of which she had read to her with such enthusiastic pleasure. Here was the scientific work they had studied together. And here was the manuscript book of essays, upon which her eye had so often dwelt with partial and loving admiration.

Who was there now to praise the originality of her thoughts, the fitness of their expression, the purity of her language? Who was there to admire the quickness of her understanding, the excellence of her memory, and the clearness of her mind in mastering the details of the various sciences they had taken up? Or who would now care whether her pronunciation were correct, or her translations spirited?

Poor Hope! Even a sorrow so right and reasonable as this, lost much of its softening influence upon her heart, because of the self-referring tendency of her mind.

No doubt she might, and ought to have felt grateful for her friend's partial love while she possessed it. She

might and ought to mourn its loss now that it was taken from her. But had there mingled with past gratitude, and with present sorrow, a more unselfish appreciation of the real worth and excellence of her friend's character, the one would have enabled her to pay back a fairer measure of the pure, disinterested love she owed her, and the other would have softened and improved her heart, and would have strengthened her for present duty towards those among whom she was thrown.

As it was, the effect was quite the contrary of this. Contrasting the partial indulgence to which she had been accustomed, with the indifference she supposed was now felt for her, she resolved to meet this fancied indifference with a similar feeling on her own part.

"I have no one now to live for, or to please," she thought ; "I must therefore learn to live for, and in myself. No one now cares what I do, or how I do it ; my own opinion must henceforth be my guide, my own esteem the only reward I can expect."

Such reflections dried her tears, as they hardened her heart ; and after staying in her own room long enough to feel sure that all traces of her recent emotion had disappeared, she went down stairs with the cold calm aspect it had lately been her ambition to wear.

She could not help being touched with the kind care that had been so busy for her comfort, and she expressed her gratitude and pleasure with a frank warmth. But even here self stepped in, and instead of reflecting upon the real kindness thus manifested, and being convinced that to one person, at least, her happiness was not a

matter of indifference, she only thought of the pleasure such an arrangement would afford to herself. And when Mrs. Campbell's anxiety for her valuable table prompted her to throw over it a not very new, nor very neat table-cover, Hope felt as much aggrieved as if a liberty had been taken with some of her own property, as if the table had been made expressly for her use.

In the course of dinner this same table-cover came under discussion, and Mrs. Campbell regretted not having a prettier one to grace such a pretty table. Something was said about the difficulty of getting anything at all respectable, either in Seaborough or at Manton, and then the subject was dropped.

Anne had looked round, in her usual quiet way, at the despised cover, without making any remark. But after tea, instead of taking to her usual occupations, she brought out a large box full of patches and scraps of chintz, silk, cloth, and all such matters, and began to turn them over as if in search of something.

As soon as the box was produced, Fanny and Susan went one on each side of her, with whispered petitions for some of its treasures, and Mrs. Campbell supposed it had been brought out for their special gratification. But they had each been made happy with the object of their wishes, and had retired to hold a consultation as to the use to be made of them, and Anne was still turning over the contents of her box.

Mrs. Campbell asked what she was looking for.

"This," she answered, drawing out a large paper parcel, and, unfolding it, she displayed a quantity of

pieces of cloth of various colours. "I think I can make a prettier cover for Hope's table out of these pieces."

Mrs. Campbell expressed her warm approbation of the plan, and her thorough conviction that Anne's good taste and skilful fingers would produce a cover quite worthy of the table.

Anne's good taste, indeed! The gratitude Hope might have felt at this effort to please her was quite swallowed up in amused wonder at any one's fancying a dull stupid girl like Anne could possibly have good taste.

The two girls had as yet had little intercourse together. Hope had taken a dislike to Anne from the first moment she saw her, and, neither forgetting nor forgiving her unfortunate strictures upon her mode of unpacking and arranging her clothes, she had quite convinced herself that she was as disagreeable as stupid, and avoided her society as much as possible.

Anne was not so stupid as not to find out the feelings entertained for her, and was not anxious to intrude her conversation where it was not acceptable. Indeed she had little time to do so had she wished, she was so constantly occupied.

She seemed to be a helper-general to the whole household. She was the little girls' governess, companion, and play-fellow. The boys had recourse to her for every service they required, from the mending of their satchels, or the covering of their balls, to the clearing up of difficulties in their lessons, or listening to their school stories. She copied Dr. Campbell's letters, sought out his missing books, and went on errands for him to say



part of the town or neighbourhood. And the poor cross grandmother was constantly sending for her to repair errors in her work, or to amuse her when she was more than usually ill-tempered and discontented.

Hope looked down with supreme contempt upon all this general usefulness.

"No doubt," she wrote to Lucy Markham, "it is quite necessary that some one should be ready and willing to undertake such offices; and, to do Anne justice, she possesses that readiness in a high degree. But then these are exactly the occupations her taste and capabilities fit her for. And while I freely accord her the merit due to her cheerful discharge of them, I may be excused if I feel very thankful that my superior educational advantages have raised me above such a sphere."

Hope placed her superiority to the account of her good education, but in her secret soul she was convinced that, under any circumstances, her natural good taste and superior abilities would have rendered such a round of commonplace duties very irksome to her. And as she sat in her bay-window with her formidable pile of books before her, she looked out with contemptuous pity upon Anne returning home with the children from their forenoon walk, or helping them in some gardening process.

And certainly if regular study in itself, and without reference to its effects, be a praiseworthy occupation, Hope's self-commendation was not undeserved.

Every day at the same hour she sat down with her

books before her. Every day at the same hour her Italian, German, or Spanish grammar, according to the day of the week, was opened in the proper place, and diligently studied for exactly the proper time. Her exercises were as regularly and carefully written as if under the eye of the strictest governess, every unknown word was as scrupulously sought out in the dictionary, and the abstract of her day's reading in history or science as duly entered in the book set apart for the purpose.

No doubt this was praiseworthy to the last degree, and a decided mark of Hope's superiority! And yet could any one have gained access to the inner chamber of her mind, they might have been surprised at the smallness of the change wrought there by so much good, profitable study. They might have wondered that there should be so few new thoughts admitted, or so little improvement in the classing and arranging of old ones. A close scrutiny might, perhaps, have disclosed a small pile of new Italian, German, or Spanish words, together with a few grammar rules, and in another corner a mass of dates, and unconnected facts in science, biography, or history. But as to any living fruit-bearing connexion between these new arrivals and the older inhabitants of the chamber, one might look long in vain.

Poor Hope had no suspicion that this was the case. With her thoughts constantly half occupied about herself, her character, conduct, and position, she had not leisure to inquire what advantage she was reaping from the hours thus conscientiously devoted to study. And while

she was congratulating herself upon the attention she forced herself to pay to the words before her eyes, it never occurred to her that the ideas of which these words were but the symbols, were altogether escaping her grasp, and leaving her mind in exactly the same state in which it was before.

She would have blamed herself had she found that she was passing carelessly and absently over her Italian book, and failing to make out the exact meaning of the passage, or had she found herself unable to remember the various facts she had acquired in the course of her reading. But that such meanings and facts could lie as so much dead and useless lumber in her mind, was a reflection that never occurred to her.

She would have been the first to detect and condemn such an error in another. And in other and happier times, when her mind was less occupied with self, she had been able to understand most intelligently, and to explain most clearly and eloquently, the real worth and advantage of all kinds of study.

But now self-congratulation on her own fancied superiority, and anxiety that others should see and acknowledge it, so completely occupied the field of her mental vision, that all other considerations were for the time obscured.

In the meantime, this consciousness of superiority was not able to make her happy. She had voluntarily withdrawn herself from the other members of the family, and she had to endure the consequences. She looked down, lonely and desolate, from the imaginary pedestal where

she had placed herself, upon the happy daily life of all around her,—a life of helping and being helped, of loving and being loved.

Very different from poor Hope's idle visions,—very different from her planned out and pre-arranged mode of life, were the reality and simplicity of that led by all her new relatives, from the cheerful, ever-busy mother of the house, down to the little Susan, whose most serious present work was that of gaining the mastery over her own passionate temper.

While one was wisely bending all the powers of her little mind to subdue the rising passion of the present hour, and the other was giving her whole thoughts to devise the best mode of assisting a destitute family, Hope was wasting hours of precious time, neglecting every present duty, and ruining the best faculties of mind and heart, with idle and false speculations upon her own character, with brilliant pictures of a time when all her perfections might suddenly become manifest to those around her, when they might suddenly become aware of the treasure they had so long possessed, and be overwhelmed with shame for having failed sooner to appreciate her as she deserved.

It is always a bad thing when one member of a family learns to stand back from the cares and labours, the joys and sorrows of the family life. It is bad, even when such a withdrawal is caused by the desire to pursue some noble and praiseworthy occupation or study. But when that study is the study of self,—when that occupation is an idle brooding over one's own character and circum-

stances, unhappiness and injury to the self-student must be the result, and perhaps nearly equal unhappiness and injury to those whose feelings are thus forgotten or overlooked.

Hope became day by day more oppressed with restless discontent. She thought her unhappiness proceeded from sorrow for the dear friend she had lost, and she felt well satisfied with the depth of her sensibility when she had succeeded in increasing the gloomy despondency of her mind, by the contrast she constantly drew between the past and the present.

Whenever she was forced to see and acknowledge her present uselessness, and the little difference it would make to any one, were she to leave her home as suddenly as she had entered it, she consoled herself with the reflection, that it had not been always so ; and by dwelling upon, and exaggerating the happiness of her former home, and the admiration and esteem she had there constantly excited, she rendered herself day by day less able to meet with patience and cheerfulness the little trials to which she was exposed, or to discharge the new duties which were laid upon her.

Dr. and Mrs. Campbell watched this increasing sadness with real sorrow. They did not blame her for it. They were not impatient for its removal. They gave her credit for all the deep unselfish affection which she fancied she felt, and thought it natural and right that she should long and severely mourn for one who had been as a mother to her.

But they were grieved and disappointed to see how

very little it was in their power to comfort her ; and her pale cheeks and languid eyes made them really anxious for her health.

"Change of scene would do her good, I think," Mrs. Campbell said, one day about a fortnight after her arrival, when she and her husband had been holding a long consultation upon her state. "Suppose you were to take her with you in the carriage when you have distant country visits to pay. The country round here is really very pretty, and she might be amused by the drive."

Dr. Campbell readily assented, and as he was going on the following morning to Valeside, a pretty village about four miles off, he proposed to Hope that she should accompany him.

Hope was thoroughly tired of herself and of her present mode of life. Any change seemed pleasant to her, and she most readily consented to go.



## CHAPTER VII.

### NEW FRIENDS.



MS. CAMPBELL'S first thought in the morning was about the weather, she was so anxious that Hope should enjoy her little excursion ; an amiable anxiety in which the weather seemed to share, and to do its best to satisfy. The sky was cloudless, the air as clear and dry as in a frosty winter day, while the perfect absence of wind, and the brilliance of the sun, made it almost as warm as in summer.

As Hope stepped into the carriage, and looked up into the deep blue sky, her spirits felt lighter than they had done since she left Denham Park.

They took a direction in which she had never been. Going straight through the town, they turned towards the beautiful wooded and hilly country to the south.

There was still a good deal of foliage on the trees, and the clear cheerful light gave fresh brilliance and beauty to their varied tints. Even those poor disconsolate-looking leaves one sometimes sees in autumn, which seem to have parted with their fresh green without gaining the rich brown dress of their more favoured

brethren, even they looked gay and pretty in the glancing sunlight, which cast a loving veil over the deadness of their colour.

It was the very day for the woods. And to the woods they were going,—to that same wooded hill which Hope had every morning admired from her bedroom window.

It was a beautiful drive. The trees came close to the road on each side, and there was neither hedge nor wall to give stiffness to the picture, or to prevent the eye from following the sunny glades and shady avenues which attracted it on every side.

When they had gone up the steep hill for nearly a mile, the carriage stopped opposite the entrance into one of the pretty footpaths which crossed and recrossed each other in all directions. Dr. Campbell was going to visit a poor patient, and Hope was left for a few minutes to amuse herself.

One could not want occupation for either eye or fancy in such a lovely spot, and Hope had the good taste to think so. She was delighted with it, and sat watching the ever-varying play of light and shade on the leaves and stems of the trees, and picturing the beauty of the more distant nooks to which some of these tempting footpaths might lead, with more genuine and simple enjoyment than she often suffered herself to feel.

Everything around was so quiet, one could scarcely fancy one's-self upon a public road. Nothing was to be heard except the sweet wild cooing of the wood-pigeon, or the cheery song of some autumn birds, allured to extraordinary exertions upon that supremely lovely day.



Hope's patience was not severely tried. Her father soon came back, accompanied by an elderly woman of very striking appearance.

Although near seventy her figure was so erect, and her step so firm, that she looked much younger. Her dress was old-fashioned and country-fashioned, but exquisitely clean ; and neat as it was, there was a picturesque kind of quaintness about it, which seemed to suit in particularly well with that quiet secluded spot, and with her own appearance.

Hope was particularly struck with the becomingness and suitability of the close narrow borders of her very white cap to the handsome old face they enclosed.

A very handsome face it was, and one which bore unmistakable signs of a mind above the common stamp. The expression of the fine mouth and nose, of the straight strongly-marked eyebrows, and even of the dark grey eyes, was almost stern in its strength. But there was a softened, subdued look about those eyes, as if they had known much and great sorrow, and the under eyelids had that marked-out full look which speaks so plaintively of past tears, or of griefs which have been too deep for tears.

Dr. Campbell introduced the old woman to Hope as his nurse Rebecca.

Hope bent forward, and held out her hand with rather more condescension than the occasion called for.

Rebecca grasped it in her own strong one with a hearty pressure, and looked earnestly into Hope's face without speaking. So scrutinizing was her glance that

Hope could not meet it. She first dropped her eyes, and then turned away her head.

"She is like you, Ernest," Rebecca said in a clear voice, and with a very good pronunciation, speaking as if Dr. Campbell were still a boy at her knee. "But," in a lower tone, "there is a shade there ought not to be on so young a face."

"Poor Hope! She has borne enough lately to call up a shade upon her face. You forget the true loving friend she has lost," was Dr. Campbell's answer, in a tone so full of tender feeling that Hope looked round at him almost startled.

He was looking at her, and there was such a depth of affectionate sympathy in his eye, as instantly called up tears to her own.

Rebecca observed them, and in her peculiar half-absent manner, as if speaking to herself, she said, "I like those tears, and I like the shade of sorrow, even on a young face. But the shade I don't like is still there, and shines through the other."

Hope's colour rose. She felt angry, astonished, and ashamed in the same moment. Rebecca saw she had offended her, and with a smile of great sweetness apologized for the freedom of her remarks, saying that she was so accustomed to live alone, and to speak her thoughts aloud, that she did not always know when she was doing so.

"You will come soon and see me, will you not?" she said. "As your father's and your mother's child, you are very precious to me; and if I do look too

keenly at you, and am too anxious to read your heart, you must remember it is only because I feel so much towards you."

Hope was so confused and bewildered by the whole scene that she scarcely knew what she said ; but her father answered for her, that she should come very soon, and, stepping into the carriage, and bidding Rebecca a cordial, I might say a dutiful farewell, he desired the groom to drive on.

Hope's heart was still swelling with the emotions aroused by her father's look of love and pity, and had she yielded to the impulse of the moment she would have laid her head upon his breast, and have given expression to the thankfulness and happiness with which it had inspired her.

But here, as usual, self made its voice heard.

It would look foolish. It would be embarrassing. She would not know what to say. And with such poor pitiful thoughts she checked the rising of true, right feelings, and became in a few minutes as self-absorbed, as forgetful of everything but self as she had been before.

At the top of the hill the road emerged from the wood, so that a clear view was obtained of the beautiful valley to which they were going.

It was several miles long, but very narrow, a range of low picturesque hills, running parallel to the one they had been ascending, and at no great distance from it. A pretty stream ran through the valley, and on the steep bank nearest them, a mile and a half farther up, they could see the village of Valeside.

Village it ought not to be called, for it consisted altogether of gentlemen's houses, each surrounded with its garden and shrubberies, and many of them further divided by a good-sized grass field.

At the further end of this group of villas, Dr. Campbell pointed out to Hope a fine old building, standing in a small but very beautiful park, ornamented with magnificent trees. This, he informed her, was the Vale *par excellence*.

Its park and pleasure-grounds, he said, had once extended over the whole space now occupied by the village. But the Carnegies, its proprietors, had for the last century or two been quite famous for the largeness of their families. And as generation after generation of younger children came to be provided for, a more profitable occupation of the paternal acres became necessary. The beauty of the spot, and of the surrounding neighbourhood, fortunately rendered eminently successful the speculation of the last proprietor, who had built all the houses in Valeside, and had succeeded in letting them on long leases, and at most profitable rents.

The more ancient and prouder Carnegies might probably have considered this scheme a desecration of the family property, and might have looked upon the advent of so many near neighbours as a positive evil. But to the present inhabitants of the Vale this very thing was counted a special blessing, as rendering their old place as desirable a habitation in point of society, as it had long been in regard to scenery and comfort.

These present inhabitants, as Dr. Campbell explained

to Hope, were an old lady, her two maiden daughters, and her granddaughter, the orphan of her eldest son, and heiress to the whole property. He added, that he intended to take Hope to call for these ladies.

"Etiquette demands, I believe," he said, "that they should first call for you. But we are so intimate, and they are so much your seniors, that I think we may violate etiquette without any impropriety. The ascent and descent of this hill is so formidable a task in the old lady's imagination, that two or three weeks must always elapse between her resolving to undertake it, and accomplishing her purpose."

As they drove up the approach, Hope looked with pleasure upon the handsome well-cared-for appearance of everything she saw. The fine old massive gates, the broad well-kept gravel road, with its borders of closely shaven turf, and the really splendid old trees, were all in her eyes tokens of the wealth and importance of the family to whom she was going to be introduced. And when her father said, that it was very likely they might invite her to remain with them while he went on to other visits, and told her she must contrive to let him understand her own wishes, should such be the case, Hope felt pretty sure her wish should be to stay.

The house was old-fashioned, and in some respects peculiar in its construction. The door-way and entrance-lobby were quite narrow, and almost mean-looking. But by contrast they made the broad old oak staircase, and the large lofty drawing-room, look all the handsomer.

In this drawing-room the two elder Misses Carnegie were alone ; the eldest a woman about fifty, the other eight or ten years younger. Both were good-looking, but very different. Miss Mary, the youngest, with her tall drooping figure, large blue eyes, and fair ringlets, looked good-natured and indolent ; while the brisk little Miss Janet seemed to overflow with life and energy. She had a short merry face, with the prettiest glossy brown hair, quite unmingled with grey, and the gayest, brightest black eyes in the world.

Both came forward to welcome their visitors with the utmost cordiality. But Miss Janet, in virtue of seniority, and in virtue of exceedingly quick movements, was far in advance of her sister. She gave Dr. Campbell both her hands, and was voluble in her expressions of pleasure.

" So delighted to see you, my dear sir. Quite an honour, I assure you, and you so busy. And to bring Miss Hope too, it really is too kind. So glad to see Miss Hope. So ashamed not to have seen you sooner. But that hill, my dear sir ! mamma is so nervous about that hill." Then turning to her sister, " Mary, my dear, this is Miss Hope Campbell. So kind in the Doctor to bring her. Where is mamma ? We must send to let her know Miss Hope is here. John, John," ringing the bell, and then running to the door ; " John, tell mamma that Dr. Campbell and Miss Hope are here. Oh, here she is. Dr. Campbell has come to see us, mamma, and has brought Miss Hope. So very kind to bring Miss Hope, and we never been to call for her," and so on

without ceasing all the time that the old lady was being introduced to their new visitor.

Mrs. Carnegie was a good deal like her eldest daughter, and though past seventy looked quite brisk and gay. She did not speak quite so fast, nor so much, perhaps because Janet's volubility overpowered hers ; but she looked very good-tempered, and seemed quite as glad to see them.

Hope's personal appearance was the next subject brought forward,—her likeness to her father and brother commented on, and her good figure warmly admired.

"Such a good height, you know, my dear sir," said the contentedly little Miss Janet. "She is so tall. Quite as tall as our Milly, I am sure, and we think our Milly such a good height for her age. Indeed, she is more than an inch and a half taller than Eliza Foster, and yet Eliza is quite as old as Milly."

"Two months older," Miss Mary put in with the air of one announcing an all-important fact.

"Yes, indeed, two months older," repeated Miss Janet with grave earnestness. "Eliza Foster is two months older than Milly, and yet Milly is an inch and a half taller than Eliza ; an inch and a full half taller. Yes, Milly is really quite tall for her age. And so is Miss Hope, I should think. I should think Miss Hope is very nearly Milly's age."

Upon examination it turned out that Hope and Milly had been born in the same month, and the delight of the three ladies at this coincidence cannot be described.

"The same age and the same height ; I am sure

they are the same height. How curious ! They must, of course, become great friends," cried Miss Janet. " But where is Milly ? Mary, my dear, do you know where Milly is ? Do ring, and send John to seek her. The same age and the same height ! It is really quite striking. I am sure Miss Hope and Milly must like each other."

Any doubts Hope might have entertained as to her share in this mutual liking, fled at once when Millicent appeared. She was indeed a lovely girl, with a fair open countenance, so full of truth and earnestness that it seemed formed to take every heart by storm.

She had been out in the garden, and coming in by a flight of steps which led straight to the back drawing-room, had received no intimation of the arrival of visitors. She came in singing, with her bonnet in one hand and a large bunch of flowers in the other. When she became aware of the presence of strangers she stopped a moment, blushing very prettily, and then advanced to greet them with a most charming mixture of modesty and frankness.

When introduced to Hope she turned on her a glance keen and scrutinizing enough to make the quickly succeeding expression of satisfaction all the more flattering.

Hope felt sure she should like her very much, and only longed for an opportunity to begin the intimacy she desired should subsist between them. But in the presence of Miss Janet such opportunity might be longed for in vain. No one could hope to converse except herself.



Soon after Millicent's entrance Dr. Campbell rose to take leave. As he had anticipated, Hope was invited to remain for a little longer, that she and Millicent might become better acquainted. Dr. Campbell could feel no doubt about Hope's wishes. Her face expressed plainly her satisfaction with the proposal. He was going to arrange that he should call for her an hour or two later, when he should be returning home ; but the hospitable old ladies insisted she should remain all day, and undertook to send her home at night.

" And John shall go to take care of her," Mrs. Carnegie added.

" Yes, John shall go to take care of her," Miss Janet repeated. " And Richard is such a careful driver, and knows the road so well, you need be under no fear for her safety."

" No ; not with Richard to drive, and John to take care of her. Otherwise you know that is really a fearful hill," Mrs. Carnegie said very seriously.

" Fearful indeed, and in the dark. But then you know with Richard to drive, and John to take care of her, she must be safe. You may feel quite sure that you shall get home quite safely, my dear," and Miss Janet turned with a most encouraging look to Hope.

Dr. Campbell had been only waiting a slight pause in the ladies' assurances of safety, to express his own perfect confidence in the same result, and he now resolutely extended his hand, determined to take leave without further delay.

But a new question had to be decided. The Doctor

must take some luncheon—cold meat, a basin of soup, or at all events a glass of wine.

No ; he peremptorily declined all offers, and laughingly told Miss Janet she should take away his character, if she insisted upon his drinking wine so early in the forenoon.

Oh, not at all, she assured him. Mr. Halket had been calling a day or two ago, and had taken a glass of wine, and she felt pretty sure it was still earlier in the forenoon. She was almost certain it was before twelve.

"Yes, it was," Miss Mary said ; "twelve struck just as he was crossing the hall."

"So it did, twelve struck just as he was crossing the hall. So you see, my dear sir, there could be nothing at all improper in your taking a glass now, when it is at least a quarter past—and Mr. Halket is, or at least was a clergyman."

"Oh, he ought still to be counted, and called a clergyman, although he does not now officiate," Mrs. Carnegie said, as if the fact were the most important in the world. "You know that the Mr. Burns we met at Cheltenham was always called a clergyman, although he had not officiated for ten years."

"No, not for ten years," Miss Janet echoed, "and still he was always called a clergyman. So you see, my dear sir, you need not be at all afraid to take a glass of wine ; it is not at all too early."

As, however, Dr. Campbell was not to be persuaded, even by the example of the clergyman, Mr. Halket, the only remaining service hospitality could render him was,

for all the ladies to accompany him to the hall door, and see him drive off.

Hope went with them, and the lawn and park looked so beautiful and inviting in the bright sunshine, that she agreed cordially to Millicent's proposal that they should take a walk ; but that pleasure could not be enjoyed as yet. Mrs. Carnegie was sure Miss Hope ought to rest a little after her long drive. Luncheon would be ready at one, and after luncheon they might go out if they pleased.

" Yes, luncheon will be quite ready by one," said Miss Janet, with her usual important earnestness. " John is always so regular. Exactly as the clock strikes one, the luncheon-bell rings, and then after luncheon you and Millicent can go out whenever you choose."

So, for three quarters of an hour, Hope had to sit and converse with, or rather be talked to, by Miss Janet and Mrs. Carnegie, Miss Mary every now and then putting in her quiet little word, to confirm what the others said, or to add some all-important fact which her quicker-speaking sister had omitted.

At first, Hope was greatly amused by an exhibition of character so different from anything she had ever seen before. But it soon became very tiresome ; and contempt for minds which could be so engrossed with trifles, took the place of any other feeling. She was too little accustomed to observe, or to reflect upon any one's character but her own, to see, as she might have done, the kindness of heart, the good temper, and perfect charity of judgment which every now and then shone out through all this trifling and gossip, or to admire the gentleness and

sweetness of Millicent's behaviour towards relatives who could not command much respect.

At one o'clock precisely the luncheon-bell rang, and Hope hailed the sound with joy. Her deliverance was now near at hand—not so near as she had hoped, however. The luncheon was tediously long. Every dish had to be commented upon, and its history told, and told again by all three. Each little particular connected with the bunches of grapes, or the different kinds of wine, had to be accurately ascertained before the minds of her hostesses could be set at rest. And out of all patience with such wearisome delays, Hope was inclined to quarrel even with Millicent, because she so often exerted herself to recollect this or that fact under discussion, or to form a grave judgment about some mere trifle, upon which her opinion had been asked.


To answer lightly or contemptuously on such occasions, would no doubt have been a great deal easier. Whether it would have been equally dutiful and becoming, Hope did not pause to consider ; but by the time luncheon was over, she had almost persuaded herself that the fine intellectual expression of Millicent's face was deceitful, and that a girl who could really gravely meditate for a whole minute, about the exact day upon which Lady Grant had praised the Vale grapes, could not be a fit or a pleasant companion for her.

Half-an-hour's uninterrupted *tête-à-tête* under the trees of the park, however, set her mind quite at rest upon this point, and fully answered her brightest hopes of her new friend's abilities and character.

They had narrowly missed losing all the enjoyment of this *tête-à-tête*, as Miss Janet had at first shewn strong manifestations of a desire to accompany them, and had seemed to think that a proper respect for their visitor required that she should do so. But upon Miss Mary's suggesting the absolute necessity of their calling for a neighbouring family who had lost a near relative, Miss Janet had seen herself obliged to give up her purpose, and to satisfy her hospitable wishes by a multitude of very unnecessary apologies and explanations.

The afternoon was one of thorough enjoyment to Hope. When they had seen and admired the beautiful gardens, and Millicent had taken her new acquaintance to visit all her own favourite nooks and points of view, they seated themselves on a well-sheltered turf seat in the park, from whence they had a fine vista through an avenue of beautiful trees, down to the shining sparkling river, and its varied picturesque banks. There they remained well contented for more than two hours, with just enough of sunshine to make them feel comfortably warm, without incommoding them with its glare.

Millicent was both an interesting and an amusing companion. Simple and unconscious as a child, she had ample leisure to look out of the little world of her own heart and mind, and to observe and enjoy all that was passing around her. She had a gaiety of spirit, a vivacity, a keen sense not only of happiness, but also of amusement, in which Hope's natural disposition had perhaps been deficient, and which had, at any rate, been long dormant.



From lighter subjects they went on to graver, and their favourite occupations, studies, books, and authors, were all discussed. Their tastes assimilated sufficiently well to render the discussion interesting, and differed enough to give it animation.

Hope was soon forced to acknowledge to herself that Millicent had read more, and to better purpose than she had. Books which she had skimmed over, and very imperfectly understood, Millicent had studied, and thoroughly mastered. In other cases, where Hope's interest had been really excited, she had read with one eye, as it were, turned upon her own thoughts and feelings, watching and judging them, and misunderstanding and distorting her author's opinions to suit her own preconceived ones ; while Millicent, with her disengaged and attentive mind, had been able to gain a clear distinct knowledge of all that was said, and of all that was meant. Even in matters of taste and imagination, in poetry, painting, or natural scenery, Millicent had an advantage over Hope. Hope could tell what passage in their favourite poets had answered to her own feelings : Millicent could do that too ; but she could besides see beauties and excellences quite irrespective of her own peculiar frame of mind, and could take pleasure in fancying how they might speak to hearts in circumstances of which she had no personal experience. Hope could say delightedly, " I have felt that ; I have thought thus : " Millicent could enthusiastically exclaim, " What a noble mind, what a warm heart, how good and right ! " Hope could tell

what parts of a landscape, real or imaginary, were pleasing to her, and could dilate upon the peculiar effect they had upon her own feelings ; she could say, " I like that river, I feel cheerful in looking at that sunshine, or sad in the darkness of that forest : " while Millicent's more simple sense of the beauty or suggestiveness of what she saw, was keener and more healthy. The different feelings that different scenes awaken in a true lover of nature, were stronger in her, because they were undisturbed by any reflections about themselves. She felt all the more deeply because she did not pause to think, or ask how she felt.

Their own previous histories were also discussed. Millicent knew the outline of Hope's, but she listened with full sympathy to all the particulars Hope gave her of the life she had lived at her dear Denham Park, and of all the love and goodness of her second mother, Mrs. Denham ; and when Hope wished it, she was equally ready to tell her of her own former life, and of those with whom it had been passed.

For Millicent had lived at the Vale for only a year. Like Hope, she had been born in India. Her mother died in giving her birth, and her father two years afterwards, when the little orphan had come home to her relatives in England. To which of these relatives she was to be consigned, had been a question which had threatened to bring discord among them all. The Carnegies thought that they had the best claim on her, and that the Vale was the only proper home for its future mistress ; and they were inclined to look with

such bitter indignation on any one who might hold a contrary opinion, that had Millicent's guardian been weak or undecided, he must have felt himself forced to yield to them.

But Mr. Carnegie had chosen wisely, when he made his brother John sole guardian to his little orphan. He was a man of sterling good sense ; and although he had all a son's and brother's affection for his mother and sisters, he was not blind to their deficiencies, and saw very plainly that they were not able to train his little ward as he wished her to be trained.

In order to avoid unnecessary quarrels and heart-burnings, he at first kept her under his own and his good wife's care. But he was a barrister in London, Millicent was a delicate child, London air evidently did not agree with her, and before she had been in his house for more than a year, his medical advisers recommended him to send her to the purer air and greater freedom of the country.

Such advice opened up the whole question again. The Lisles, her mother's parents, lived in the country as well as the Carnegies. The latter again advanced their claims with increasing warmth ; but Mr. Carnegie was firm to his sense of the duty he owed to his ward. During the year Millicent had been under his roof, he had become intimately acquainted with Mrs. Lisle, and had been convinced that she was as well fitted to educate her grandchild, as he knew his own mother was the contrary. So to her care he decided upon giving up his charge.



This decision caused a year or two's coolness between himself and the worthy Vale people. But the Carnegies were a placable and good-tempered race, and it was not very long before they began to listen to, and to acknowledge the reasonableness of Mr. Carnegie's often urged plea, that Millicent ought not to be debarred from all companionship with young people of her own age, as she must have been at the Vale.

The contrary was the case at Wanford, her new home. Her mother had been the eldest of a very large family, and when Millicent went among them, she had uncles and aunts of all ages, from the grave Aunt Eleanor, her governess, down to the four-month-old Uncle Oswald, still in his cradle in the nursery.

As regarded wealth and luxury, there was no comparison between the Vale and Wanford. The Lisles were poor. Colonel Lisle had been forced to leave the army from the state of his health. Wanford was his own property, but it was very small, scarcely larger than a good-sized farm. It was in a pretty, healthy part of the country, and had a good though not large house upon it ; so, upon his return to England, a year or two before Millicent became an inmate of his family, he determined to take up his abode there, and by farming his own land, endeavour to eke out his small income. In this, aided by his clever energetic wife, he was even more successful than he had hoped. And thanks to her wise, but not mean economy, all his large family were brought up in great comfort and happiness, and thoroughly well educated even with their limited means.

But with these limited means, and with the numerous family, it was of course quite necessary that each member should contribute his or her share in the general labours of all. It was indeed a busy, active, but most happy household ; and in all its labours, and all its happiness, the little Millicent had her full share. She early learned to understand the pleasures of being useful ; and whether it were in assisting her own play-fellows in their various amusements, amusements they must have wanted, had they not provided them for themselves, or whether it were in the graver task of helping the older members in some more useful and necessary work, Millicent was equally happy, and equally recognised the fact, that to have something to do for others was a great element in every-day happiness.

But in the midst of all this outward activity, the wants of the mind were not neglected. Colonel Lisle was a highly educated, most accomplished gentleman, and as willing as he was able to assist in the instruction of both sons and daughters. Eleanor, the more especial teacher of the latter, was a really talented woman, and had enjoyed the very best instruction of all kinds ; and the elder sons, as they grew up, and went out into the world, inheriting their father's studious tendency with their mother's love of usefulness, were constantly acquiring fresh stores of knowledge, and returning in their yearly visits home to enrich the others, by communicating what they had gained.

Neither were pleasure and amusement overlooked. The children had more numerous and varied pleasures

than most have, though all of the most simple and inexpensive kind.

Millicent's description of some of these pleasures was lifelike and animated, and had to Hope all the interest of novelty. Although she had passed all her life in the country, it had been a country-life of carriages and horses, gardens and gardeners, and she knew almost as little of the more ordinary rural life and occupations as any town-bred maiden could do.

She had had good experience of the pleasures of a drive through fine scenery in an open barouche, or smooth-rolling close chariot ; but she knew nothing of the mirth and frolic attendant upon such cart expeditions as Millicent described. She had often enjoyed the beauties of the well-kept shrubberies and gardens of Denham Park ; but she had never tasted the pleasure of contemplating a border freed from weeds by her own two hands, or a plot of flowers which owed its beauty to no tendance but her own. Like all children she had had her pets. The most beautiful and rarest pigeons and rabbits had luxuriated in the best appointed and most elegant of dove-cots and rabbit-pens. But she had never known the pleasure of contriving, and planning, and helping to make a rude house for well-beloved favourites who must have remained for ever houseless, except for her exertions ; of rising half-an-hour earlier, in order that the rabbit-court might get a thorough cleaning out ; or of wandering through a hot autumn day up and down the bean-field, gleaning a store for the pigeons, who depended almost entirely upon her care for their daily food. To all such details she *listened* with equal amusement and interest.

More than twelve profitable years Millicent passed in this cheerful, peaceful home ; but at the end of that time its peace and cheerfulness were somewhat suddenly broken in upon.

One of the sons, a fine promising young man of twenty, died of consumption, after a very short illness, and very soon afterwards one of the daughters showed symptoms of the same disease. Her alarmed parents resolved at once to comply with the suggestions of their medical adviser, and take her to a warmer climate ; and so the whole household was broken up. Wanford was let—one sister went with the invalid and her parents ; two others, Eleanor and Charlotte, had been married for two or three years, and their houses were to be the homes of the younger children during their parents' absence.

How Millicent was to be disposed of became again a question. Her aunt Eleanor was most anxious to have charge of her. This aunt was the idol of her young niece, her very beau-ideal of perfection. And as Millicent had known her husband, the rector of the parish in which Wanford was situated, nearly all her life, and loved and revered him most truly, his home seemed a desirable one for her ; but, much to Hope's surprise, Millicent said she had herself chosen the Vale.

Upon Hope's expressing the surprise she felt at such a choice, Millicent said simply—

“ Well, I don't see what was wonderful in it. I am sure it was the right choice—Grandmamma Lisle thought so. Good, kind Uncle John left me at full liberty to choose. But then grandmamma had told me that he

had incurred his mother's displeasure by sending me to Wanford at first, and, of course, I was anxious not to be again the cause of such quarrels. Besides, Aunt Eleanor did not need me. Little Amy Lisle has gone to her, and she has two dear little babies of her own. There was no young thing to come here, except myself, and grandmamma is the better of having some one to amuse her, and to run errands for her, and so on."

"And had you never seen your grandmamma and aunts before you came to live among them?"

"O yes; Uncle John used to bring me here every year."

"I wonder, then, how you could resolve to make this your home," Hope said energetically. It was an awkward speech, and so she felt the moment she had uttered it, and even before Millicent's quick rising colour shewed that she too felt it to be so.

"It would be idle to pretend that I do not understand what you mean," she said, after a moment's embarrassed silence on both sides. "You think that my aunts and grandmamma are very different companions from those I have been used to; and no doubt you are right so far; but remember you have only seen their weakest side. You have never seen, as I have, Aunt Janet unable to eat, or sleep, or rest, for the thought of the distress she has witnessed in some poor man's house. You have never seen her overflowing with happiness at hearing of a great or good deed performed perhaps by a perfect stranger. You have never seen her sit up all night with a suffering friend, and come home gayer and

more active than ever, to satisfy her mother that she has not suffered from her watching. I speak of Aunt Janet alone ; but, indeed, grandmamma and Aunt Mary are just as full of goodness and kindness as she is ; and no one can see them as I do every day, and all day, without loving and respecting them."

"Respecting them !" Hope could not help saying.

"Yes, respecting them," Millicent repeated with greater energy. "Such kindness and unselfishness as theirs is worthy of all respect. Before I came here, Grandmamma Lisle asked me if I were sure I could respect them as I ought. Not that she doubted of their deserving it, but she thought I might not perhaps have the good sense and right feeling to discover their claims to it ; and I don't suppose I should have had, but she pointed them out to me. She told me, that if I had any fear that I might fail in this thing, that I ought not to come here ; because, to live with those I did not respect might inflict a lasting injury upon my mind and character ; but that, if I felt sure of myself, this was my proper home. I had not much fear then, and any I had has been removed long ago. I could not do otherwise than admire and reverence them for all the simple goodness of their hearts, and all the active benevolence of their lives."

Millicent looked very lovely as she said this, a generous ardour flushing her face, and glistening in her eyes. And Hope looked at and listened to her with genuine admiration. Such sentiments met with her most cordial

approbation, however little capable she might be of putting them in practice.

Through the rest of the afternoon she had great pleasure and interest in watching her new friend's conduct, in seeing how the love and respect she had professed shone out in every word and action, and how simply forgetful, or rather unconscious, she seemed of her own superior mental acquirements.

During the long solitary drive, the same thoughts occupied Hope, and when she arrived at home, she was still absorbed in admiration of Millicent, and in bright pleasant speculations about her own conduct in similar circumstances,—so completely absorbed, that she could return only very short cold answers to Mrs. Campbell's kind inquiries as to how she had enjoyed herself, and could spare only a passing glance to the very pretty, tasteful table-cover which Anne had exerted herself to finish this evening.

Good Mrs. Campbell was sorely disappointed. From her husband's account of Hope's evident enjoyment of the drive, and evident pleasure at being invited to remain at the Vale, she had expected to see her return cheerful and happy, and had hoped that the sight of her completed table-cover would be a good conclusion to a pleasant day. But Hope was as grave and quiet as ever, and seemed only anxious to get off to her own room, as if the day had been one of fatigue and annoyance.

However, Mrs. Campbell was not a person to brood over a disappointment, or to feel cross on account of it.

Her good-night to Hope was as cordial and motherly as ever, and there was not a thought of reproach in her heart, as she looked a little sadly into her cold calm face. There were only compassion and a hope that the morrow's pleasure might perhaps prove more successful than to-day's had been.


For pleasure was provided for the morrow also. Dr. Campbell had received an invitation for her from Mrs. Foster, sister-in-law to the Eliza whose height and various acquirements were such constant subjects of rivalry to the good aunts of Millicent. The Fosters lived at Glendale, a newly-made place, about a mile and a half out of Seaborough, in the direction of the Castle. And Hope and her father set out on their way thither soon after twelve on the following day.





## CHAPTER VIII.

### ANOTHER NEW FRIEND.

OPE had not seen either of the ladies she was going to visit. They had called since she came to Seaborough, but she had been out at the time. She had heard from her step-mother that Eliza was an orphan, and lived with her brother and his wife. No description of the appearance or character of either lady had been given to her ; but one or two half-sighing " Poor Elizas " from Mrs. Campbell, had led Hope to believe that her home was not in all points very comfortable.

When they were ushered into the drawing-room at Glendale, two ladies advanced to greet them, whom Hope supposed to be Mrs. and Miss Foster. But their welcomes were so eager and so rapid, that Dr. Campbell's attempts at introduction got no farther than the words, " My daughter Hope."

The oldest-looking of these ladies was about the middle height, dark, grave, and cold in aspect, stately and dignified in manner. As Hope looked at her, she thought that she should certainly not like to be dependent on her for kindness and consideration.

The other was a small slight figure, with the prettiest child's face, Hope thought, she had ever seen,—one of those fair, innocent, happy-looking faces, which irresistibly remind one of the angels one sometimes sees in the pictures of the old masters. Hope was greatly taken with her looks, and thought herself singularly fortunate in meeting with two such very attractive-looking creatures as Millicent Carnegie, and this lovely Eliza Foster.

When the first confusion of arrival was over, and the party were seated, Hope was somewhat provoked to find herself taken possession of by the dark lady, whose appearance had by no means prepossessed her in her favour ; while the fair one was sitting opposite her, talking to Dr. Campbell, and looking each minute more beautiful and fascinating, as she became animated in conversation.

Hope was so much occupied in watching the play of her features, and in listening to the sweet ring of her childish voice, that she paid but scant attention to her own entertainer, and answered very mechanically to her questions concerning the weather, the pleasantness of the drive, and such commonplaces. She was at last startled out of this dreamy state, by hearing her companion say, " It was very good of you to come to see us upon so short an invitation. I was so glad yesterday when Mrs. Foster told me that she had asked you to come."

Mrs. Foster ! Hope thought, in a kind of bewilderment. Who, then, are you ? Can you be the Eliza of whom I am expected to make a friend ? Yes, it must be so. For, with a pang of disappointment, it flashed upon her mind

that no one could think of comparing Millicent's height with that of the little fairy opposite.

That bewitching little creature was then no permanent inmate at Glendale, only a passing visitor. And Mrs. Foster had yet to make her appearance.

Almost before Hope had settled this in her own mind, she was surprised to see her father rise, as if to go away, without having seen the lady of the house. Still more surprised to see the fair unknown rise too, and prepare to accompany him from the room. But most surprised of all, when the latter paused for a moment as she passed her, and said, "You will excuse me for a few minutes, Miss Campbell. One of my little boys is ill, and I wish to go with Dr. Campbell to see him."

One of her little boys! Hope's wide open eyes too clearly expressed her perplexity, not to be understood.

"Ah, you wonder to hear me speak of having children," Mrs. Foster cried, breaking into the prettiest, merriest child's laugh. "You think I look like a child myself. But I have no less than four, and really my eldest boy looks nearly as tall as I do."

And still laughing she left the room.

"What a beautiful creature your sister-in-law is!" Hope exclaimed as the door closed.

"She is generally thought so," was the cold indifferent answer.

"And she has such a sweet voice," Hope added.

"So I have heard people say," was again Eliza's only answer.

Hope felt provoked and indignant. This dark, cold-

looking creature was then envious of the superior attractions of her fair sister-in-law. In her virtuous indignation, Hope for some minutes preserved a strict silence. But as her companion did the same, it soon became rather awkward, and, in order to break it, she made some remark upon the beauty of the flower-garden, as seen from the window.

"Yes ; I believe it is well laid out, and the flowers seem to thrive tolerably. But really this place is so very dull and lonely, that I confess I can see no great beauty in anything belonging to it," Eliza said, with the air of a victim to fortune.

Hope remarked, in a tone almost of censure, that she could scarcely fancy any one feeling dull with such a fascinating companion as Mrs. Foster seemed to be.

"Oh, Flora is the best-tempered little creature in the world. But she is as much a child in mind as in appearance. She is no companion," Eliza said, in a careless, indifferent tone. Then, as she remarked Hope's look of indignant surprise, she added, with a kind of caressing manner, "You wonder that I should speak so openly of my sister-in-law to a stranger. But I do not feel as a stranger to you ; I have heard so much about you from Lucy Markham. Perhaps you do not know that she is my cousin. I spent some months at my uncle Dr. Markham's last summer, and have so often heard her speak of you, that you seem to me like an old friend."

From the first moment she had heard Eliza's name, it had sounded familiar in Hope's ears, although she

could not understand why. She now remembered that Lucy had frequently written about this cousin, and about her desire to see and know Hope. But there had been so much of sad and absorbing interest in the days that had succeeded these letters, that their contents had completely faded from her mind.

She now recollected that Lucy had once or twice said, that she feared poor Eliza had rather an unhappy discontented temper, but that she fancied there was a good deal in her home to excuse such discontent.

"Dear, kind, charitable Lucy," Hope thought, as this supposition came back to her mind. "You always think the best. And you had not seen or known Eliza's sister-in-law, or you could never have fancied that the fault could be on her side." And Hope was already prepared to find faults without number and without excuse in Eliza.

Before they had half discussed Lucy, and her father and mother, they heard Dr. Campbell's carriage drive off, and immediately afterwards Mrs. Foster came in with her eldest child, a very handsome boy of five years old. He was tall and old-looking for his age, and Hope could not help looking at him in a kind of wonder that the child by his side could really be his mother.

Mrs. Foster saw her wonder, and was excessively amused by it. I use the adverb advisedly, for really both in measure and duration, her mirth was excessive.

Hope might readily enough have perceived this under other circumstances, but now she was completely fascinated by Mrs. Foster's singular beauty and grace. And,

willing to contribute to her amusement, and to excite and encourage her exquisitely musical laugh, she told her of the mistake she had made on her first arrival, without, of course, saying anything about the disappointment she had felt in being undeceived. Mrs. Foster was delighted beyond measure.

"What a pity," she cried, "that I did not think of mystifying you a little ! It would have been so amusing. I might have passed myself as Eddy's sister or cousin. You would have called me cousin, would you not, my king, if I had asked you ?"

No ; Eddy stoutly maintained that mamma was a much prettier name than cousin, and that mamma he should always call her, and nothing else.

"Well, you might have called me aunt then, Eddy ; that is quite a pretty name," Mrs. Foster suggested, laughing at his vehemence.

"No, indeed ; Aunt is an ugly name. You are my mamma, and play with me, and let me do as I like. Aunt Eliza is not at all nice. She scolds me, and——"

"O Eddy, Eddy, that is naughty," Mrs. Foster exclaimed, laying her hand upon his mouth. "Aunt Eliza only scolds you when you deserve it," and she glanced at Eliza with an expression of anxious timidity, which seemed to say, that if as easily amused, she was also as easily frightened as a child.

Eliza took no notice of either speech or look. She had been all this time sitting quite still and silent, with an air of cold and contemptuous indifference.

"As if," Hope wrote to Lucy Markham—"as if she  
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had been appointed censor-general of the manners and conduct of all mankind. But as if she despised the present company too completely to wish even to discharge the duties of such an office towards them."

Such a cold supercilious silence threw a damp over the whole party, and it was a relief to all when luncheon was announced.

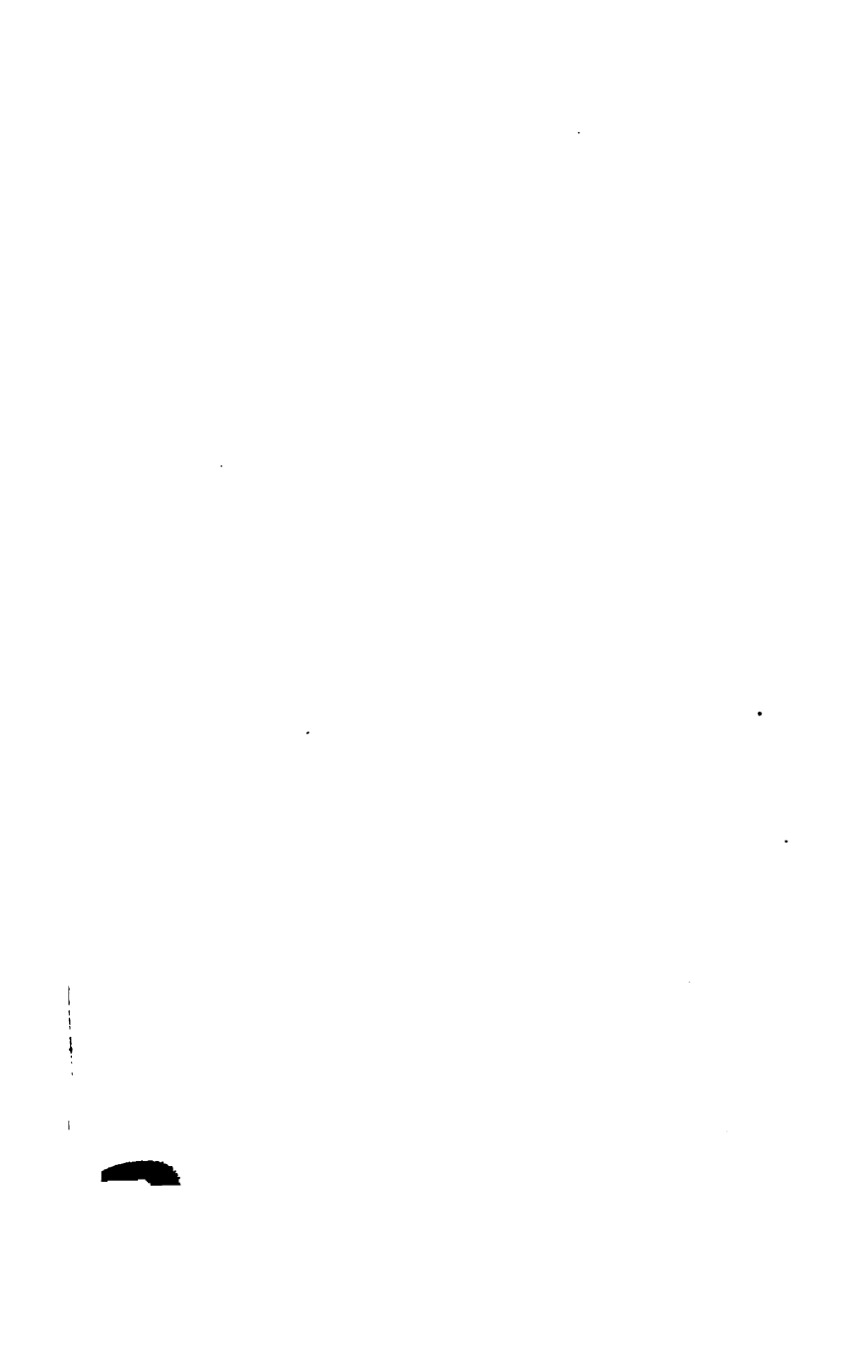
After luncheon they went out to walk. But the weather was by no means so favourable as it had been on the preceding day. Clouds had been gathering all morning, and soon after three it began to rain so heavily that they were forced to return to the house.

Hope regretted this the less, because Eliza had, during their walk, been manifesting a most earnest desire to be friendly and confidential with her, and had been constantly contriving to gain exclusive possession of her. And as neither desire nor contrivance were at all mutual, Hope was not sorry when their return to the drawing-room precluded all further efforts of the kind.

The afternoon passed off pleasantly enough. Eddy and the other children came down to the drawing-room. They were all pretty, lively, pleasant-tempered little things, and Hope was for some time quite amused watching them and their child-mother at play together. Before such amusement had time to become tiresome, a new attraction of some kind drew them off to the nursery. And then Mrs. Foster, finding that Hope was fond of music, sat down to the piano, and played and sang to her as long as she pleased. Her voice was neither very extensive nor powerful, but exquisitely sweet and true.









Mrs. Foster plays and sings to Hope.

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She attempted nothing that was beyond her powers, but sang simple ballads and national melodies more charmingly, Hope thought, than she had ever heard any one else do.

Mr. Foster did not come in until near dinner-time. He was a sensible-looking, gentlemanly man. Somewhat like his sister in her gravity and taciturnity, he was very unlike her in his estimate of his wife. He evidently idolized his little Flora, and thought her as nearly perfect as a human being could be.

And she, in her unselfish devoted love to him, seemed to gain both in mind and character in his presence. Although decidedly greatly his inferior in education and intellect, her love seemed to make her capable of appreciating and admiring him as he deserved, as it certainly incited her to listen to every word he spoke, and to strive with all her might to enter into and understand his every thought and feeling, that she might ever find fresh food for admiration and esteem. Her childish levity and thoughtlessness disappeared while with him, and all that remained of the child was her innocent gaiety and light-heartedness, her simplicity, and unconsciousness of self.

Hope thought, and thought truly, that there was a real beauty in all this, and that in such a character there was much to interest the feelings, as well as to awaken respect. But Eliza seemed quite unconscious of it.

"She is so absorbed in the contemplation of her own superiority," I am again quoting from Hope's letter, "that she can neither see nor appreciate all the goodness that

there really is in her beautiful and captivating sister-in-law. That she should discover that Mrs. Foster is as superior to her in all the qualities of the heart, as she fancies herself above her in intellect, would be, perhaps, more than we could expect. But that she should remain so determinately blind to all her fine, honest feeling, provokes me beyond measure. And I feel that such a selfish, self-absorbed being can never be my friend."

When Hope returned home this evening her mind was as full of the characters she had been studying, as it had been on the previous night. But her censure was more voluble than her praise had been. And so warm and vehement was her condemnation of Eliza, that Mrs. Campbell's charitable nature was excited to attempt her defence.

"Poor thing! I cannot deny that she has an unhappy discontented temper," she said. "But I daresay she has more to try her than we know of. The children are so sadly over-indulged, and I daresay must be sometimes very provoking."

Hope warmly defended the children, and said they were so sweet-tempered and amusing she could find no excuse for any one's losing temper with them. Hope forgot how often she had inwardly grumbled over very small annoyances from Fanny and Susan, who, besides being as sweet-tempered as the little Fosters, were as remarkably well trained as the others were the reverse.

"Then you should consider that really after all Mrs. Foster is too childish for her age and situation," pursued Mrs. Campbell. "I know that her heedless impulsive

disposition has often placed Eliza in painful and embarrassing situations. Besides, Eliza is really very talented. Before she came to live here, she had enjoyed a great deal of the best and most intellectual kind of society. No doubt she must miss it. And no doubt she cannot but feel that Mrs. Foster is not a companion to make amends for its loss."

"Still," Hope pursued decidedly, "she ought not so perversely to shut her eyes to the good that is in Mrs. Foster, only because she has not all that Eliza chooses to wish for. And as to intellect and talent, no one can say that Eliza is superior to Millicent Carnegie, and yet how rightly and nobly Millicent bears with the want of all intellectual companionship in those around her! How ready she is to love and respect all the good of even the most inferior nature!"

"You liked Millicent, then," Mrs. Campbell said, looking much pleased. "I fancied you spoke rather coldly of her last night."

"Speak coldly of Millicent Carnegie! No, indeed. You must have been mistaken. Millicent is not a person of whom one can speak coldly;" and Hope felt herself greatly superior to her step-mother in her recognition of this fact.

Whatever might be that lady's private opinion of the contrast between Hope's animated censure of Eliza, and her cold praise of Millicent, she was at least well pleased to see her animated at all. Anything was better, was more wholesome than the apathy and indifference with which she had for the last week or two been regarding

every person and everything. Change of scene and occupation had certainly done her good. And she was glad that fresh opportunities of trying the same cure had now presented themselves.

Two invitations had been received during Hope's absence—one to a tea-party in the village for the following evening ; the other, a much grander affair, an invitation to dine at the Castle, to meet Lady Harcourt, Sir Charles Grant's only child, who, with her husband and his sister, were coming to pass a week with her parents. Lady Grant had brought the invitation in person, and would take no refusal, Mrs. Campbell said.

"I told her that we thought both Anne and you rather young to go much out to dinner as yet. But she said that there should be no one but ourselves and the Harcourts. And as Helen Grant, Lady Harcourt I mean, and Anne, have always been very particular friends, I thought it would be a pity to be too scrupulous, and to deprive them of the pleasure of meeting."

Hope made no remark. She was meditating upon the strange announcement that any Lady Harcourt could make a friend of such a stupid, ordinary kind of girl as Anne Drummond.

Mistaking her silence for disapprobation at the invitation being accepted for her, Mrs. Campbell hastened to assure her that, if she had the least objection to go, she could quite easily make her apology to Lady Grant.

No, Hope said, she had no objection. She was

secretly very much pleased at the prospect ; but she expressed herself in such a tone of indifference, that Mrs. Campbell had many serious doubts about her real willingness to go.

When Hope first came home, Mrs. Campbell had felt that she might very naturally dislike to mix in society at all, so soon after having sustained such a severe trial as Mrs. Denham's death must have been ; and she had been quite prepared to make it easy for her to remain in seclusion, as long as she felt inclined.

But the first invitation to go out had been given in Hope's presence, and she had shown such an evident wish to accept it, that her step-mother had felt it would be better not to interfere.

She had, almost unconsciously, felt that she should have liked better had Hope been more anxious to remain quiet for a little ; but she had quickly checked the half-formed censure, by the recollection that Hope was probably quite ignorant of what was customary on such occasions, and that the possibility of excusing herself from accepting such invitations had never occurred to her.

In this she was mistaken. Hope knew quite well what was ordinarily done under similar circumstances, and the dread of casting a slight upon the memory of one whom she had sincerely loved, had very nearly induced her to resolve not to go out in the evening all winter. But, poor girl ! she was restless, discontented, and unhappy ; without confessing it to herself,




she yet felt that all her expectations of making a great impression upon her own home circle were disappointed; and she was not sorry to find opportunities of displaying her perfections before other eyes which might, she hoped, prove more observant and discerning.



## CHAPTER IX.

### A TEA-PARTY AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

HE tea-party at the Misses Morrison's was a very small affair. It could, Hope told herself, not be much worth while to try to captivate people who lived in such a small cottage as theirs was ; and yet she did her very best to look particularly elegant and distinguished when preparing for their party. She affected to despise their opinion ; but had really wrought herself up to desire admiration so earnestly, that even theirs seemed of importance in her eyes, and all the more so as she understood that they had seen better days.

Their father had been a man of considerable property, and during his life his daughters and son had enjoyed every luxury they could desire. He had died suddenly more than twenty years before my story begins ; and after his death, it was discovered that he had been for years engaged in most ruinous speculations of various kinds, and that after his debts were paid, a very small sum would remain for his family.

His only son, Walter, had been brought up to no profession, but had always been taught to expect that he

should be able to lead a life of gentlemanly leisure ; but, of course, when the truth became fully known, it became equally evident, that he must now do something for the maintenance of himself and his sisters.

He was a good, well-intentioned kind of man, and at once declared his determination to do his best, in order to find a means of livelihood. But, unfortunately, the best of his endeavours consisted in sitting over the fire, sighing, wishing, hoping that something would turn up, or in wandering through the streets with his hands in his pockets, looking very much as if he expected some employment was to drop from the skies, without any exertion on his part.

Two or three situations were offered to him, but none suited him, and he, poor man, had little idea of suiting himself to them. Of one, the hours were too early in the morning ; of another, too late at night—in one the work was too severe, and in another too mean. In short, as no place seemed likely to be created exactly fitted to his notions or capacity, it soon became evident to his sisters that poor dear Walter could really get no employment, and that they must now try what they could do.

They had been brought up quite as uselessly as he had been. Never taught to serve themselves, it did not seem very likely that they could learn to serve others ; and their education had been by no means good enough to enable them to take the comparatively genteel line of teachers. One might have thought their case as desperate as Walter's. But to them the little word

“must” proved a tower of strength, and under its protection they advanced boldly to the battle of life.

Their plans were soon laid, and wisely laid. The few hundred pounds which was all that remained to them of their once large fortune, must be made to last until one or both of them had acquired the means of adding to it. For this end they immediately began to inquire where they could live most cheaply. Seaborough was recommended, and to Seaborough they came, renting the smallest and cheapest house they could find, and furnishing it in the most economical manner. One sister, then, having chosen millinery and dressmaking for her profession, set about learning it with the utmost diligence ; while the other, with equal earnestness, applied herself to acquiring such a knowledge of household matters as might enable her to make poor dear Walter perfectly comfortable without being at the expense of a servant.

Such exertions met with the success they deserved. In a very short time Miss Jane Morrison found herself fully employed by all the town’s people, and by many of the county families, and making money far more rapidly than her brightest hopes could have anticipated. In the course of twelve or thirteen years she had realized a sum large enough to keep herself, sister, and brother in perfect comfort for the rest of their lives ; and as her health was not then very good, it was thought better to retire from business, and live as they could upon their means.

But these were not quite ample enough to enable

them to equal in their style of living many of their neighbours who were of much more lowly birth than themselves, and they felt this a good deal. Although they had shown great sense and decision in meeting the serious ills of fortune, they were by no means above the weakness of being very jealous of their position in society; and now that they had no longer their business to occupy their time and thoughts, they were almost altogether taken up with plans and schemes of various kinds, for appearing to the best advantage in the eyes of their acquaintance.

Their house was a good representation of their feelings in this matter. It was what is called a cottage *ornée*—and *ornée* it was to the highest pitch of pretension and bad taste. Its outside was the more imposing, as the builder had exerted much skill to make two small houses look like one large cottage. A door in the middle of the south front gave admission to the Morrisons' half of the building, while a similar door in the centre of the north front formed the entrance to the other half; and the casual visitors of both families were expected to believe that the whole house was in possession of their own host or hostess.

Such an arrangement was exactly suited to the taste of our two worthy old ladies. And neither of them, perhaps, ever came up the little garden-walk leading to their own door without congratulating herself upon the admirable skill with which this had been devised.

They had the less excuse for all this over-anxiety, because they had for many years been admitted, on terms

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of equality, into all the best society that Seaborough afforded. Their little history was well known, and the spirit and honest industry they had displayed met with the respect they deserved. Even soon after their arrival they had been visited by some of the best families in the town. And when they finally retired into the greater gentility of private life, others who had been held back by a fear of degradation in being intimate with milliners, gladly came forward to add their names to their already large visiting list.

Among the most favoured and highly honoured of their acquaintance were the Campbells. And the old ladies had exerted themselves to the uttermost to get suitable guests to meet them on this particular evening. But they had been singularly unfortunate. They had been baffled by prior engagements on all sides, and in the end could secure no one but the co-occupants of their cottage, Mr. Tait, the young haberdasher, and his little wife.

This young couple were making their way up in the world entirely by their own exertions. They had both been the children of inferior tradesmen, but were prospering steadily and rapidly. Their style of living was as much on a par with the Morrisons' as their house was similar to theirs. But there was this great difference between them. To the Taites this house and style were only a kind of resting-place in their progress upwards, while to the Morrisons' they were the end of all their hopes, and many steps below what they had begun life with. They were very conscious of this, and, in spite

of their real kindness of heart, they were intensely jealous of their young neighbours, and were constantly aiming, perhaps not so much to mortify the Tait's, as to exalt themselves by the display of some particular elegance or luxury which the others did not possess. And on this evening, when Hope had gone prepared to impress her entertainers with admiration of the elegance of her dress and manners, their minds were so filled with anxiety to convince Mrs. Tait of their superiority in fashion, and knowledge of the world, that they really had no thought to spare for anything else.

Hope thought the evening intolerably tiresome. It must be confessed that there was little to interest or amuse any one. And as she had no idea of trying to amuse others, she sat perfectly silent all night, looking very dignified or very sulky, as the case might be.

She was indignantly surprised that her step-mother should have brought her into such low company. And as soon as they had left the house on their walk home, she endeavoured, in a dignified manner, to convey to that lady's mind some sense of her outraged feelings.

"Did you know, ma'am, whom we were to meet to-night?" she asked, in a tone of constrained politeness.

"No, my dear, I did not. I had no reason to know. I did not ask," Mrs. Campbell answered, quite unconscious of the offence she had committed.

"I think it was taking a great liberty to ask *us* to meet a haberdasher and his wife," Hope said energetically.

"I don't think them the most entertaining or instruc-

five people we could meet, my dear," Mrs. Campbell answered in her contented tone. "But for two hours' time one really needs not care very much. And Mr. Tait is, after all, very well informed in his own way. He told me to-night some very curious things about the people in the manufacturing districts in England, where he lived for some years."

"I did not allude to their powers of entertainment so much as to their position in society," Hope rejoined loftily. "It was an insult to ask us to associate with tradespeople."

"Oh, as for that, my dear, our position in society is pretty well ascertained. I consider myself quite as little exalted by dining with a Sir Charles Grant, or a Lord Harcourt, as I think myself debased by drinking tea in company with a Mr. and Mrs. Tait. I should not like young girls like you and Anne to associate much with people beneath you, lest you might acquire bad habits from them, or, worse still, might get a taste for being the best of your company. But once a year, and we never meet these people oftener, I don't think it can do you much harm."

The touch of honest pride in the beginning of Mrs. Campbell's speech harmonized too well with Hope's notions for her to attempt to refute the opinion founded on it. But she was not satisfied, and, shifting her ground, asked what possible good they could get from such a party as they had left?

"Well, my dear, not much, I daresay. But then we did not go to get good. We went only because we



should have vexed and pained the good old Misses Morrison if we had refused. And although I do grudge the loss of so much time a little, yet I don't think it has been quite thrown away, so long as we have given them so much pleasure, as I know we have. They know my opinion upon this matter very well, and never ask us oftener than once or twice in the year."

Once or twice in the year too often, Hope thought, for all one could gain from such people.

"But I am not at all sure that we are entitled to make our own gain the principal thing to be thought of," Mrs. Campbell said quietly. "I have a real respect for the Misses Morrison, and, as I said before, I am glad to please them when and how I can."

Well, really, Hope said, she should be puzzled to discover their claims to respect.

Mrs. Campbell told her how well and wisely they had acted in the time of adversity, adding, "That even if their unselfish devotedness to their poor helpless brother were less deserving of respect than it was, every one must admire their constant contentment and cheerfulness under all circumstances."

"Oh, don't call it contentment," Hope exclaimed scornfully. "If to be in ecstasies because one has half a dozen more silver spoons than one's neighbour, or because one's drawing-room is a few feet longer, if that be to be contented, then contentment is a virtue of marvellously easy attainment."

Mrs. Campbell was silent for a moment, then laying her hand lightly upon Hope's shoulder, as they walked

side by side, she said kindly, "I cannot say that you are altogether wrong, dear Hope. But don't you think it is a pity to dive into our friends' characters, only to draw to light all their little weaknesses and follies? And can you hope, my dear, to lead a very contented old age if you teach yourself while young to look upon the black, instead of the bright side of persons or things?"

Hope indignantly refuted the implied charge. Nothing, she said, could be more opposite to her character than such a habit. She had always been taught to condemn and to avoid it.

"In the abstract and in theory, my dear, I daresay you may. But Hope, dear, I have often found myself doing very pertinaciously the very things I had condemned in others."

Hope was beginning again to defend herself very warmly. But a sudden flash of conscience passing through her mind, and turning the flush of anger on her cheek into the deeper scarlet of conviction, kept her silent. One or two instances of the habit Mrs. Campbell had condemned recurred with uncomfortable distinctness to her memory, and she was still endeavouring to reason away her self-reproach on their account when they arrived at home.

Dr. Campbell was waiting for them in the dining-room. He rallied them a good deal on what he called the selectness of their company, and Mrs. Campbell showed a most good-natured pleasure in Hope's having the satisfaction to find that her father's opinion on this point concurred with her own. He made himself par-

ticularly merry about Anne's being doomed to entertain poor stupid Mr. Walter for a whole evening. But Anne defended her companion with much spirit and quiet humour, and declared herself perfectly satisfied with her evening's entertainment.

"Mr. Walter knows more about flowers than any man I know," she said, "and he gave me a great deal of advice, by which I intend that Fanny and I shall profit next summer."

"Well, well, Anne, that is the right way to take things," Dr. Campbell said, more seriously. "It is better to learn about flowers, or about anything, from anybody who can teach us, than to sit gloomy and silent because we do not happen altogether to like the people around us."

Another reproof to Hope! And all the more cutting that it was quite unintentional on the part of the reprover. Hope felt it, and it was with a mind most uncomfortably at war with itself that she entered her own room, and began to prepare to go to bed.

Self-reproach was a most unwonted guest in her mind, and she did not like his company at all. To banish him, she moved about the room as quickly as possible, and got very expeditiously through the business of undressing, trying all the time so to fill her mind with other and pleasanter thoughts, as to banish those which were tormenting her. But in vain. Conviction pressed harder and harder, and at last, just as she was ready for bed, she felt herself forced, as it were, to sit down in the arm-chair by the fireside, and try to clear up the tumult in her mind.

She was induced to this less by an honest desire to examine into her real state, and discover her faults, than by an earnest wish to reason away self-reproach, and restore self-respect to its wonted dominion. But even with the partial one-sided view of matters which such a frame of mind gave her, she could not long conceal from herself that she really had, for some time past, been indulging in a habit of looking gloomily and discontentedly upon every person and everything around her. She had been dwelling upon the little inconveniences and annoyances her new position presented, and forgetting its many comforts and pleasures. And as regarded people, her conduct had been still more blameable.

How unwilling had she been to see the good points in the characters of the good ladies at the Vale, even after Millicent had pointed them out to her ! And how almost angry she had felt with Mrs. Campbell because she had tried to prove that poor Eliza Foster was not wholly bad !

Then there was her grandmother. Well ! perhaps there might not be many very bright spots in her character to attract the eye. But at any rate it was wrong so to dwell upon and brood over the dark ones, as to make them appear ever darker and darker, until they became even intolerable.

And coming still nearer home, there was Anne Drummond. Was she, after all, as stupid and unamiable as Hope fancied ? Could she make herself so useful to so many people if she were altogether stupid ? Could she be anxious to do so were she altogether unamiable ?

And Hope's cheeks were again dyed with shame, as she remembered various kindnesses done to herself, and in such a quiet unobtrusive way as showed a real desire to give her pleasure, and a quiet thoughtfulness in finding out the means to do so.

And Mrs. Campbell! Hope remembered with even startling distinctness numberless instances of her kindness. In particular, that first evening after her arrival, how gentle, how kind she had been to her! and how had Hope felt in return—unwilling to see all her goodness, anxious, almost eager to find something wrong! And why?—only that she might excuse herself from giving her all the love and respect she so well deserved.

Hope could bear such unpleasant reflections no longer. She sprang from her seat, put out the light, and got into bed as quickly as she could.

But her unwelcome companions came to bed, and lay down with her; she could not get rid of them. She turned and turned upon her pillow; they turned with her, and presented themselves with ever-increasing distinctness. She had been acting wrongly—she had been encouraging a morbid and even sinful state of mind. This was making itself clear to her beyond the possibility of denial.

The next question was, Why had it been so? This state of mind was not natural to her. What had caused it? And here relief began to dawn on her.

To the peculiarly painful circumstances in which she had been placed for the last few months, must the blame be imputed. The heavy sorrow of losing one who had

been as a mother to her, had crushed her to the very ground, and, depriving her of all wholesome energy of thought or feeling, had made her unfit to struggle against any evil habits which had presented themselves ; and her sadly isolated situation in her own father's house, with none to love or care for her, had depressed her spirits and induced that melancholy and gloom which had led her so far wrong.

None to care for you ! Ah, Hope ! not far from your own room there is another, in which a true, tender woman's heart is at that very moment beating quick with gratitude to God, because she thinks that He has heard her prayers, and is blessing her efforts to cheer and comfort the motherless girl thrown upon her love. Pray on, good, earnest-hearted mother, and your prayers shall be heard. Patience and wisdom shall be given you to persevere, even though the reward of your labours be for a while delayed.

Yes, delayed—still delayed ! For even now Hope's dawning self-reproach is fast vanishing before self-pity.

“ Oh, mamma, mamma ! ” she cries, half aloud, as she did once before in the library at Denham Park, “ what shall I do without you ? How can I live on now, that the only one who loved me, or had sympathy with me, is gone, and I can see her no more ? ” and her tears and lamentations are checked by no thought, that the isolation she mourns over is her own fault ; by no recollection of her own words about Eliza Foster,—that if there was no one to care for her, she might care for others,—if she had none to sympathize in her joys and sorrows, she

had at least some in whose joys and sorrows she could sympathize.

No. Such reflections were, just then, as far as possible from poor Hope's mind. She was quickly getting comforted, and soothed even by her own grief. It seemed to her such a sign of strong, deep feeling, that it was soon dispelled in admiration at its own intensity ; and in an hour Hope had fallen asleep with the comfortable persuasion, that even her very faults were only caused by an excess of what was most good and praiseworthy.

When she awoke on the following morning, a vague feeling of unhappiness seemed to oppress her. As her recollection became more clear, it unfortunately took the direction of the more recent self-pity, rather than of the previous more wholesome self-blame ; and all the time she was dressing, her mind was fully occupied with the peculiar hardships of her situation.

Every one had some one or more objects of interest and love. She alone had none. Even the children were of some importance to the rest of the family ; but she stood alone, quite alone, and was looked upon with indifference by all those most nearly connected with her.

But this was the lot appointed for her ; and all she had to do was to make the best of it,—to bear with patience and cheerful self-forgetfulness all that was unpleasant, and to receive with gratitude all the good ; and her spirits rose again as she began to form resolutions of such extraordinary patience and brave endurance as might well have suited the situation of the greatest martyr the world ever saw.

Hope was still absorbed in such meditations when she went down to breakfast. All the family were assembled, except Mrs. Campbell, a most rare exception, for she was generally the first down-stairs. Just as Hope entered the dining-room, one of the boys looking up from the book he had been reading, asked in a tone of great surprise where mamma was.

"She has gone out," Anne said.

"Gone out at this time of the morning?"

"Yes; she has gone to see old Jenny Walker."

"And what in all the world could take her to see that crabbed old witch so early?" Ronald asked.

"Old Jenny had a stroke of palsy last night," Dr. Campbell explained. "Don't you remember I was sent for after tea; and mamma thought she had better go early this morning to arrange about some one to take care of her. The poor old body is so much disliked, that there is not much chance of the neighbours looking as kindly after her as they would do after any one else in the same circumstances."

"And well she deserves it, too," Ronald said, energetically. "It would serve her right if every one left her to take care of herself."

"Ronald, Ronald!" Dr. Campbell remonstrated; but Ronald was not so easily checked.

"Why, papa," he said, "you don't know what a wicked old woman she is. She is on her good behaviour before you; but really she uses such bad words, and calls people such terrible names, that mamma will never allow us to go through that street, however great



a hurry we may be in, lest we should hear some of her shocking language."

"Well, well, poor body, she is not likely to offend any one's ears again," Dr. Campbell said compassionately.

At this moment Mrs. Campbell came in, and the servants were summoned to prayers, so that no further remarks could be made.

Mrs. Campbell looked grave, as might be expected from the nature of the scene she had left ; but under her gravity there was an expression of pleasure, and this the keen-sighted Ronald soon discovered. He watched her for a few minutes in silence, while she poured out the tea, and gave her husband a report of his patient ; but at the first pause he said abruptly—

"Well, mamma, if you were me, or like me, I should say you were glad that that old vixen was ill."

"My dear boy, what could put such a shocking idea into your head—glad that any one should be ill !" Mrs. Campbell said, suspending her labours for a moment in amazement at the accusation.

"At least, mamma, I am quite sure you are glad about something," he persisted ; "I can see it in your face, for all you look so serious."

She smiled, shook her head at him, and told him that he ought not to watch people so closely.

"But you are not altogether wrong," she added. "I have been witnessing something which has pleased me, though that something was certainly not poor Jenny's sufferings. It was the conduct of our humble-minded little friend Nanny," turning to Dr. Campbell and Anne ;

“you know how ill Jenny has always behaved to her and to her husband—you know how, because they as Christians cannot render railing for railing, she has long been in the habit of expending upon them the fury aroused by other and more resentful neighbours, whom it might not be so safe to offend—and you know how hard poor Nanny has to work to support her children and her helpless husband—and how often her sleep is interrupted by his restlessness, poor fellow. Well, as soon as Nanny came home last night, and heard of Jenny’s seizure, she at once offered to sit up with her, and nurse her through the night. I know she had scarcely slept any for the two previous nights, for I saw Sandy yesterday, and he was shedding tears, poor fellow, over his utter inability to keep quiet on his bad nights, and so let his poor worn-out wife rest ; and yet, there I found her this morning as contented and happy as possible, and waiting upon the poor, cross, old woman, with as much tenderness as if she had been her own mother. When I remonstrated with her about trying her strength so much, she only smiled in her cheery way, and said—

“ ‘ Oh, it’s naething, ma’am. I am so thankful that the gudeman was real well last night, so that I could leave him with the bairns, and give all my mind to her, poor body.’

“ ‘ But she has always behaved so very ill to you,’ I said.

“ ‘ Ay, ay,’ she answered simply, ‘ that’s the very thing. If she had been a kindly body she could have had a dozen nurses, and would not have needed me ;

but you see she is that cankered that nobody can abide her ; so I was obliged to come, you may say. There was little goodness, ma'am, I assure you ; for you know she couldna be left alone.'

" ' But there is not one of the neighbours that she has ever treated so ill as she has done you,' I could not help saying.

" She looked up to me with such a bright look in her honest eyes, and said quietly, ' True, ma'am. But you see Sandy and me jist think that everybody is so good to us, that maybe we will never get another chance of keeping our Saviour's words,—Do good to them that despitefully use you.' "

Ah, Hope, Hope ! Was it not a pity that you had not as yet done with resolving ? That you had not as yet begun to practise ? Would not this have been a good opportunity for exercising that ready sympathy you have been so pleasantly dreaming about all morning ? But the dreams have been speaking rather too loudly to you. You have heard this little tale, it is true, and have been so far interested and pleased by it. But it has touched your heart far less deeply than it has the hearts even of these thoughtless children, and of the rough school-boys. Fanny's tears are rising as she hides them upon her mother's shoulder, and says what a good Nanny she is, and how much she loves her for it. And Ronald has to whistle a very merry tune in order to conceal how much feeling the narration has awakened in his boyish heart.

Dr. Campbell asked what Mrs. Campbell had done

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about Nanny. She could not go through a day's hard work, he said, after being three nights without sleep.

Mrs. Campbell said she had been a good deal puzzled how to manage. Poor Nanny could not afford to lose even one day's wages, and she could not offer to give her even that sum of money. It might have looked, she said, like wishing to pay her for doing a good action.

"So the only thing that occurred to me was to ask her if she could spare little Nanny to us for to-day, to give us a day's work. I know they cannot both leave Sandy at the same time. And so the mother must stay at home, and at the same time we can pay the daughter as much as the other would have earned. The only difficulty is, that I really have no work to give Nanny," she added, laughing. "But I trust to your ready wit, Anne, to devise some."

Anne smiled, and suggested that they might persuade Janet that she had a great desire to see her mother, and keep little Nanny to do her work. Mrs. Campbell fully approved, and Dr. Campbell added his commendation of the arrangement.

Nanny was not at all a strong child, he said, and it was far better for her to work about the house than to sit sewing all day. And he further volunteered to take Janet part of the road to her mother's on the dickey of the carriage, as he was going in that direction at any rate.


Again, I say, Hope, that it would have been a good thing could your fine resolving have only been brought

to an end before this time, so that you might have been able at once to practise the quick-sighted appreciation of all goodness that was henceforth to distinguish you. In such a case, you might, perhaps, have seen a good deal to admire in the delicate thoughtful kindness displayed in helping this poor woman. But as it was, your eyes were too earnestly bent inward, and the whole affair passed by without your thinking of it.



## CHAPTER X.

### JULIA'S ARRIVAL

 HIS was a kind of gala day to the Campbells. Julia was expected home in the evening.

Hope had heard many allusions made to this absent member of the household, many regrets at her absence, many wishes for her return. But she felt no interest and little curiosity about her. Without taking the trouble to inquire into the reasonableness of such a conclusion, she had decided that Julia must be like Anne, and therefore no pleasant companion for her. She had no desire for her return. And as the evening came on, and the children began to station themselves in the windows, and to fancy that every noise was the sound of approaching wheels, she felt so wearied of all the expectation and anxiety around her, that she at last withdrew to her own room, on the pretext of having letters to write.

But she made no preparation for writing them. She sat down on her comfortable chair, and gave herself up to a fit of idle, melancholy musing.

The day had passed rather unsatisfactorily, very dif-

ferently from what she had planned. Numerous little calls for patience and consideration had presented themselves, but none great enough to exercise that noble kind of magnanimity of which she had been dreaming. And so she had let them pass by unheeded. With her eyes looking up at the high great character of herself which she had imagined, she could not condescend to glance down upon the little duties at her feet.

I said, these small calls had passed unheeded. But that was not strictly true. Conscience had taken some note of them, and was now punishing their neglect with a certain vague feeling of dissatisfaction, which made Hope very uncomfortable.

She was not at all willing to listen to the voice of conscience, and greatly preferred turning her thoughts back to the past,—to past joys, past hopes, past praise ; when all she had done, or said, or thought, had been so interesting to her ever partial friend, and had seemed to her so free from blame.

While still indulging in such sad regretful thoughts, she heard the sound of a carriage coming down the street. It stopped, and then followed the opening and shutting of doors, the sound of many steps running hither and thither, merry voices talking and laughing all together, and all the noise and bustle consequent upon a happy arrival. All the family seemed to go out to meet Julia, and to greet Mrs. Maitland. Then the carriage drove on with the latter, and the others returned to the house.

Hope heard them go into the dining-room, and then comparative stillness succeeded. She began to think she

ought to go down stairs ; that it seemed cold and ungracious to keep thus apart from what was made a family rejoicing. But before she could quite make up her mind upon the matter, she heard the dining-room door open again. Footsteps were heard on the stair. Then came a knock at her own door, and in answer to her invitation the door was opened, and Julia and Anne came in together.

Hope was perfectly startled at Julia's appearance. She had so long ago decided that she must be like Anne, that she could scarcely believe that the beautiful creature before her was really Julia.

For Julia was very beautiful. She was like her mother, but a good likeness. She had the same fine features, pretty, fair complexion, and dark yet bright brown hair, with that kind of golden gloss which reminds every one of a ripe nut in the sunshine. But Julia's complexion was more brilliantly fair, her hair a brighter shade.

Hope felt so bewildered at finding her so different from what she had fancied, that she scarcely knew what was said to her, or what she answered. She could only look from Julia to Anne, and from Anne to Julia, and wonder how they could possibly be sisters, and so utterly unlike one another.

Before many minutes elapsed, she saw that they were as unlike in manner as in appearance. Anne so grave and quiet ; Julia so gay, frank, and talkative. But a very few minutes more sufficed to convince her that the difference was quite in Anne's favour.



"I was quite impatient to see you," Julia was saying, when Hope began to attend to her, "and quite disappointed not to find you with the rest. So, as you did not seem inclined to come down to me, I proposed to Anne that we should go up to you."

It was kindly meant. But Julia had certainly less tact than Mrs. Campbell and Anne. Hope felt at once from her manner that she had been an object of curiosity; that Julia had been speculating about her, just as she might have done about any other stranger. And this was the first time that any such feeling had been manifested towards her. She did not like it.

"Mamma said you were writing letters," Julia continued. "But I see no letters. No books, nor work either," glancing at the bare table. "I think you might have been better employed among us all than sitting quite idle here."

Hope felt provoked and irritated, and all the more so as she really could not frame any good reason for staying up-stairs in perfect idleness. But Julia required no answer. She was looking round the room, noting the changes in the situation of the furniture, and recommending others, and all with the air of one who was quite competent to advise, and whose opinion was of great importance.

Hope disliked this confident manner exceedingly, and began to wish that Julia had been as plain and stupid-looking as Anne, if she had only been at the same time as inoffensive. All Anne's former offences were now forgotten, and her quiet unobtrusiveness alone remembered.

After a few minutes, during which almost all conversation was on Julia's side, she said she must go and take off her bonnet.

"But you will come down stairs, Hope, will you not? It is stupid to mope up here by one's-self, when we are all merry down in the dining-room," she said, in her quick, assured way.

"Do come," Anne added persuasively, and her tones sounded soft and low, in comparison to Julia's loud key.

Hope did go, and was welcomed with unusual cordiality. Mrs. Campbell was tenderly anxious that Hope should see no difference between her own arrival at home, and Julia's. She made room for her beside herself. And while the others were talking and laughing, and relating remarkable events that had happened in Julia's absence, and listening to her adventures, Mrs. Campbell constantly remembered Hope's presence, and sought constantly to engage and interest her in what was interesting the others.

But in this matter, not even her kindness and consideration could succeed. As Hope listened to the gay talk around her—as she heard the constant appeals to Julia's taste and judgment, the constant calls for her sympathy—as she saw the children hanging round her, Susan on her knee, Fanny at her feet, and the youngest boy leaning on the back of her chair—as she remarked the importance attached to every little thing that had happened to her, merely because it was to her it had happened,—as she noted these things, the contrast between her own position and Julia's became more and more marked, and her spirits more and more depressed.

And we cannot be surprised that it should be so. Her position was in some respects a painful one, and we cannot blame her for feeling its painfulness—we cannot but feel that it was natural she should—we can only wish that she could have been led to make the best of things—to see the good mixed with the evil, and above all, not to exaggerate this evil to her own mind.

Could she have forgotten herself, there was much in the little scenes around her to interest and to please. The kindness of the children towards each other—their readiness to be pleased and amused—the affection between the two branches of the family—the confidence and trust of the younger on the elder—the gentleness and kind sympathy of the elder towards the younger. In all this a more disengaged mind might have seen much to admire.

But Hope could not disengage her thoughts from herself and her own position. She had indulged egotism too long to be able easily to overcome it. It is not a fault which we can discard whenever our own happiness seems to require us to do so. It is not a habit that can be fought against when our feelings are much moved. The battle must be begun when we have full possession of all our energies, and can look calmly and fully on the state of things around and within us.

And Hope did not even try to shake off her self-engrossment. She was not even conscious of any call to do so. It never occurred to her that she ought, for the sake of the others, to exert herself to overcome the

melancholy which must cast a shade over their happiness ; but she sat getting more and more silent, sinking deeper and deeper into the gloom of her own sad thoughts, until the cloud on her spirits had extended itself in some measure to every member of the little circle ; and even the youngest became conscious that there was something, she scarcely knew what, which was marring the mirth and gaiety which had at first reigned.

When Hope went up to her room that night, and sat down to write to Lucy Markham, she poured forth all the sorrow which had been oppressing her ; and allowing it to exaggerate itself in giving it expression, she wrote such a description of her isolated, lonely position, as filled poor Lucy's heart with the most tender compassion, and caused her even to propose to her mother that they should invite her to come and live with them.

On the following morning, a new and happier turn was given to poor Hope's thoughts, by the arrival of letters from Ernest.

Several letters had been received from him since Hope's coming home. Animated, entertaining, and interesting letters they had been, and they had always given Hope the greatest satisfaction as evidences of the intellectual mind and gay temper of the writer.

But those received this morning had a peculiar interest of their own. They were the first he had written after hearing of Mrs. Denham's death. He and his companions had been wandering about so much, that he had never received his letters from home, until the very day he wrote.

There was a note to Hope, in which he expressed the tenderest, kindest sympathy in her sorrow, and bitter regret that he should have been away enjoying himself, while she was in such deep affliction. He was most anxious to come home, he said, but could not do so at once. One of his three companions was very ill, and he had engaged to remain with him in the German town from which he wrote, until the other two came back from a little excursion they were making in the neighbourhood. The very hour they arrived, he assured Hope, he should set out, and lose no time on his journey home.

Besides this note to herself, Ernest had written to his father, but that letter was not given to her to read as his former ones had been. Mrs. Campbell had before this found out that Hope was quite unaware how much Mrs. Denham had been to blame in keeping her estranged from all her own kindred. Hope had never known of the frequent proposals that had been made for her coming to Seaborough, or for Ernest's going to Denham Park, so that the brother and sister might become acquainted with each other—proposals which Mrs. Denham had always contrived most courteously and plausibly to evade. In Ernest's letter, he alluded to these various plans, and deeply regretted their having proved abortive. And Mrs. Campbell, thinking it could do no good to stir up such matters now, thought it better not to allow Hope to see his letter.

But Hope's mind was fully satisfied with her own. Her heart was so completely laid to rest as to her brother's feelings towards herself, that she felt no

anxiety about anything else, and did not think of even wishing to see what he had written to others.

It was very well that Hope had received this refreshment. For she met with a good many little trials in the course of the day.

It was Saturday, a holiday. The boys were at home all day, and devoted themselves to the newly-arrived sister with an earnestness which might, under other circumstances, have aroused all Hope's sad and jealous thoughts ; and have made her feel again, as she had told Lucy she had been so often made to feel, on the previous evening, that to them she was a sister only in name—in reality she was a stranger, and an uninteresting stranger.

In addition to this grievance, Julia and she did not get on particularly well together. They were not at all suited to each other, and we know poor Hope had little idea of suiting herself to others, or of bearing with their want of suitableness to her.

Julia was good-tempered and kind-hearted. One could scarcely fancy how a daughter of Mrs. Campbell's could be otherwise. But she had not the tact and consideration possessed by her mother and sister. She was quick, impulsive, and gay even to heedlessness, and often said and did things for which she was sincerely sorry the very moment after they were said or done. She never gave herself time to reflect upon the peculiar feelings or position of those with whom she had to do, so that she often vexed and provoked those whom she most wished to please.

I have called Anne the helper-general of the household. I might call Julia helper-general to the whole neighbourhood. All the poor, aged, and infirm looked to Miss Julia in their troubles. It was to Julia that the charitable ladies came for assistance in any embarrassment about their working-societies, or their poor-clubs. And it was Julia who took the superintendence of the girls' school, and to whom its worthy teacher had constant recourse in every trouble.

Julia had all her mother's active cheerful benevolence, but hers was not so judicious or so well regulated as Mrs. Campbell's. She so earnestly wished to help all who needed it that she often undertook to help too many at once, and then, in order to keep opposing promises, she was apt to ask assistance from others, with very little regard to their convenience or inclinations.

On the Monday evening after her arrival she came into the dining-room, between dinner and tea, with a roll of coarse blue flannel in her hand, and her face full of perplexity. Mrs. Campbell and Hope were there alone; Hope reading, Mrs. Campbell busy transferring some working materials from her work-box to a hand-basket she had on her arm.

"I am sure I don't know what to do," Julia began.

"What is the matter, my dear?" Mrs. Campbell asked calmly, for she was well used to Julia's difficulties.

"Why, you see, mamma, I promised Miss Dods to be at the school to-morrow at ten o'clock, to teach the girls a new tune. And I have to write out ever so many copies of it for them. It will quite take me all

the evening. And then I had forgotten that old Peggy was to come for her flannel bed-gown to-morrow, and there is not a single stitch put in it yet."

"Well, my dear, I am sorry for you," Mrs. Campbell said, "I wish I could help you; but I have promised to spend the evening at Grandmamma Campbell's, for the purpose of helping Hannah to get some chair-covers finished, so I cannot work for you too."

Julia stood for some minutes turning over the piece of flannel, and looking very much annoyed.

"I wonder if dear good Anne could not help me?" she said half aloud.

Mrs. Campbell was leaving the room, but she turned back to say, very decidedly, "No, my dear, do not ask Anne. She has plenty of work of her own to do. I know she has been working hard all day to get through with her own manifold labours, so as to have a quiet evening for reading, while the children are out. Don't ask her."

A few minutes longer Julia stood undecided. Then a bright thought seemed to flash upon her, and she turned to Hope.

"Oh, Hope," she said, "you have nothing particular to do. Like a good girl, will you just run up this tiresome bed-gown for me? It won't take long. It is quite a simple affair," and she ran on talking very fast, and cutting up her flannel, without even waiting for Hope's answer, and without remarking the look of indignant surprise her unceremonious proposal had called up.



Hope was, indeed, very much provoked. She did not at all like the task in itself. And then to have it thrust upon her as it were ! She not even allowed the liberty of choice ! Her consent not even looked upon as a favour ! And yet how could she refuse without appearing more disobliging than she cared that any one should think her ?

Before she had quite made up her mind what to say, Julia's quick fingers had cut out the bed-gown, and she brought it over to Hope.

"You see the sleeves and all are cut in one piece. So there is really little work. I am sorry the flannel is so coarse. But Peggy says she does not care a pin's point for finer stuff. And it is so soft, you will not find it hard to sew. You will find thread and needles in mamma's work-box," and, putting the flannel into Hope's unready hands, she ran off singing with provoking gaiety.

"She has gained her point, and saved herself trouble," Hope muttered, "and she does not care at all whether I like to do it or not," and she looked with great disgust at the coarse blue flannel.

As she did not see how she could help herself without explanations which she did not choose to enter upon with such an impracticable person as Julia, she began slowly to prepare for her distasteful task. She took the first needle and thread she found ; both a great deal too fine. She had no idea how the work should be done. Julia had spoken of running it up, and she supposed that was the proper kind of seam. She meant to

make her stitches small and neat, but she soon found that the thickness of the cloth made it a difficult matter to do so. She broke one needle in the attempt. She took a coarser one, and, caring very little how the work was done, contented herself with the size of stitches most convenient.

She had not done more than two or three finger-lengths when tea was brought in. After tea, before she could take up her work again, Julia had got hold of it, and was examining the workmanship in her unceremonious manner.

"Why, Hope," she cried, with a merry laugh, "is this the way you sew? How long do you think that work will last?" and, holding it up to the light, she drew the two sides of the seam apart, so as to display to full advantage the length and looseness of the stitches.

Hope was very angry, but she struggled hard to preserve a proper dignity.

"I am sorry it does not please you," she said coldly, "but it is the best I can do, and—"

Julia would not allow her to conclude.

"O yes, of course you can do better," she cried. "Only, I suppose, you did not know how. See, you must have much coarser thread. This will do," bringing a reel from her mother's store, and threading the needle. "Now, you must always make the new stitch go back upon the last one in this way, and draw your thread pretty tight, you know. You see there is no difficulty in it, when once one knows how to set to work," and again putting the work down before Hope, she went off

upon some errand of her own, without giving the least time for remonstrance or objection.

Hope felt excessively provoked, but at the same time quite helpless. It would evidently be of no use to refuse, as Julia would not listen to her, and might probably only say still more provoking things, in answer to any objection she might urge. And so she saw herself doomed to spend the whole evening upon a most tiresome task. It was such a thankless one too ; Julia really seeming to have persuaded herself that it was Hope's duty to make the bed-gown, and that gratitude for her doing so was quite uncalled for.

Thus, unable to resolve to decline the work, and equally unable to make up her mind to set about it cheerfully, Hope stood while the tea things were being removed, looking sadly into the fire, brooding over and increasing her disinclination to the business, and making all that was disagreeable in Julia seem ten times more so by dwelling on it.

When she at last roused herself from such profitless and uncomfortable musings, and went to resume her hated bed-gown, she did not find it where she had left it. Looking round, she saw that Anne had taken it up, and was working at it with a diligence and rapidity which was a great contrast to Hope's slow listless way of proceeding.

Hope made an exclamation of surprise, and Anne looked up with a pleasant smile.

" This is tiresome work for you," she said, " I mean to finish it."

"But it is as tiresome for you as for me, and I undertook it," and Hope spoke with unusual cordiality. The quiet unobtrusive kindness of the younger sister stood out in very bright contrast with the characteristics her fancy had just been bestowing upon the elder one.

Anne answered her with great sincerity that she did not think the work at all tiresome, and that she should really like to finish it. But, remembering what Mrs. Campbell had said about Anne's wish to have a quiet evening for reading, Hope persisted for some time longer in desiring to relieve her from it. Anne was not to be overcome, however, and Hope at last gave up the point, at the same time asking if there was nothing she could do for Anne in return.

"Yes," Anne answered readily, seeing at once that it would give Hope pleasure to have her offer accepted; "if you will read aloud to Julia and me, you will help us on with our work. And I am sure we should both like it very much."

Hope's cordial assent was lost in Julia's loud approval of the plan: "Anne says you read aloud most beautifully," she said.

Hope was well pleased with the part assigned to her, and exceedingly well pleased at the tribute paid to her reading-aloud powers.

The choice of a book was next discussed. And this also Julia settled.

"I know the very thing," she cried, running out of the room.

In a few minutes she returned with two little volumes.

"Here are two to choose from," she said. "Only I ought to have given you a greater choice of style. These are both poetry."

Poetry! Hope could not help glancing at Anne. She looked as if she were the last person in the world to enjoy poetry. But Anne's face expressed unmixed gratification, and Hope took the two books. One was "The Curse of Kehama," the other a volume of Tennyson's poems.

Julia explained that when they had been in Edinburgh for a day on their journey home, her grandmamma had offered to buy her a book, that she might have some amusement for the evening, after the old lady went to bed, which she did early.

"I chose 'The Curse of Kehama' for your sake, Anne, for I knew you wished to read it, and then dear good grandmamma, finding out the reason of my choice, bought this other volume for my own sweet self. A clear reward of merit, you see. Now, Hope, which shall it be? The one you have not read, if you have read either."

Hope had read both, and liked both. So it was settled that first one and then the other should be taken.


Anne had not at all exaggerated the beauty of Hope's reading. She did read remarkably well; and, in high good-humour at the unexpectedly pleasant turn affairs had taken, and anxious to deserve the praise given, she exerted herself to the utmost, and did full justice to her authors.

Her auditors were pleasantly attentive, and, as regarded one of them at least, she soon saw reason to doubt the correctness of her preconceived opinion of her want of poetical taste. As she finished a poem of Tennyson's, the simple pathos of which had made her own eyes glisten, and her voice falter, she looked up for a moment, and saw that Anne's work had dropped from her hand, that her eyes were full of tears, and her lips were parted, as if she were breathlessly eager to catch every word. From that hour her estimation of Anne began to rise, and she began to doubt the correctness of the notions she had conceived of her stupidity and insensibility.



## CHAPTER XI.

### DISAPPOINTMENTS.

 THE following day was the one on which they were to dine at the Castle ; and Hope looked forward to it with much pleasure.

Poor child ! The gay visions she had formed of the popularity she had hoped to obtain, immediately on arriving in her new sphere, had all disappeared. At home, she was only one member, and by no means a very important member, of a large family. To her grandmother, she was the disliked image of a disliked daughter-in-law. And to the neighbours, she was only Dr. Campbell's daughter, neither so much admired as Julia, nor so much liked as Anne.

But at the Castle she persuaded herself things would be very different. There her superiority would be appreciated, and her claims to consideration acknowledged.

It so happened that she had heard a good deal about Lady Harcourt from a friend of Mrs. Denham's, who had seen a great deal of her during the last London season. She had been described to Hope as elegant, highly accomplished, and very talented. And to such a person,

Hope flattered herself, she must be more attractive than any of her companions.

Hope was in general quite free from conceit about her personal appearance. But just now she had so fostered her desire for admiration, that everything seemed important to her that could in any way insure her obtaining a due share of it.

She was therefore far more than usually solicitous about her toilet, and far more than ever before, elated with its success.

Being in deep mourning, she had no choice of dresses. But her rich black silk happened to be particularly becoming to her, and the two or three handsome pearl ornaments she possessed added to the simple elegance of her appearance.

She was perfectly satisfied with herself, and went down stairs, feeling only a little anxious lest the dress of her companions might put her to shame, through want of taste or fashion.

But the first sight of the three ladies, assembled in the dining-room, put all such anxiety to flight.

Mrs. Campbell was looking particularly well in a handsome satin dress, with a tasteful and most becoming cap. And the plain white muslins of the girls were perfectly well made, and fitted them very nicely.

Julia, indeed, looked radiantly beautiful. When Hope came in she was at the piano, singing a merry Scotch song to the admiring boys. She had the rare charm of looking even prettier when she sang than at any other time. And now the arch gaiety of expression her song



had called up, suited exactly the style of her face, and added to the brilliancy of her really great beauty.

A basket full of hot-house flowers from the Vale stood on the table, and Anne was arranging them in glasses. The girls wore beautiful bouquets, relieving the pure white of their dresses, and a third, more choice than the other two, lay on the table for Hope.

Hope was more than satisfied, she was greatly pleased with the whole aspect of affairs. The only remaining cause of anxiety was the non-appearance of Dr. Campbell. He had not returned home to dress, and it was already the hour when they ought to have set out.

In the intervals between her songs, Julia fretted a good deal in a good-humoured merry way at this delay. But Mrs Campbell sat on the sofa working as diligently and unconcernedly as if she had expected to spend the whole evening at home.

"Well, my dear, it can't be helped," she said, in answer to Julia's lamentations over the lateness of the hour. "Every one knows that a medical man is not master of his own time."

"Yes, mamma," Julia answered, laughing. "Every one knows it well enough. But people don't remember it when they are cross from hunger. It is very disagreeable to fancy our host and hostess fretting and fuming, and looking at the clock, and listening for the sound of carriage wheels, while we are still quietly at home, not even able to set out."

Mrs. Campbell's philosophical advice, not to fancy anything about it, was interrupted by an announcement

from Anne that papa had come, followed by a racing out of the room of all the boys, who hoped to persuade Brian to give them a drive while the carriage was waiting.

Dr. Campbell looked in to say, that he should be ready in five minutes, and went up-stairs, followed by his wife.

She returned in a few minutes, looking very grave.

"I am not going, girls," she said.

"Not going, mamma !" they cried all at once.

"No, my dears. I am going to spend the evening at Duke's Court. Grandmamma has met with a very painful accident. She has upset a kettle of boiling water over herself. One of her arms, and both her feet are very severely scalded. We must not leave her with no one but Hannah to wait upon her."

"No ; but you must not stay, mamma," Julia cried eagerly. "It would be quite an affront to Lady Grant. You are the last who ought to stay."

"And it would not be pleasant for Hope to go without you, mamma," urged Anne. "You know they are all strangers to her."

This argument seemed to weigh more with Mrs. Campbell than the other, and Anne seeing it, went on to say that she should be quite happy to stay, and should change her dress, and go to Duke's Court as quickly as possible.

"You shall do nothing of the kind, Anne," Julia cried with a good-humoured wilfulness, catching hold of her as she was turning to leave the room. "There

is only one person who ought to stay, and that is I. Mamma cannot, from respect to Lady Grant. Hope cannot, from the same reason, as it is her first visit. And as for you, Anne, you know quite well that Helen Grant would break her heart if you did not go, and that is a catastrophe not to be contemplated for a moment."

Hope felt grateful to Julia for the way in which she had mentioned her. She had been feeling that she ought to stay. And, to do her justice, she should have been quite ready to do so, had she not been conscious of her grandmother's dislike to her. To give up a pleasant party, and to subject herself to all the crossness of the probably fretful sufferer, were sacrifices of sufficient importance to insure Hope's willingness to make them. But she had felt very fully that her presence would be unacceptable, and had therefore felt uncomfortably doubtful as to what she should do. Julia's positive assertion that she ought not to stay, and Mrs. Campbell's hearty assent to it, were a great relief to her.

In the meantime, Julia was taking the bouquet out of her dress ; and Anne was trying in vain to persuade her mother to be on her side. Mrs. Campbell thought most decidedly that Anne ought to go.

"But tell me, Julia," Anne said earnestly, going up to her—"tell me, do you really like to stay?"

"Why, no," was the laughing answer, "I can't say I do. I like parties better than you do, Mrs. Sober-stay-at-home. And I don't like to nurse cross old ladies. But I still less like to go where I am not

wished for, and where I know every one will think that I had much better have stayed at home."

"But I don't at all like you to stay at home, and you are looking so pretty to-night," Anne said, looking proudly at her.

"Nonsense! As if anybody at the Castle cares whether I look pretty or ugly. Now, Anne, don't talk nonsense. You know as well as I do that ever since she arranged to come down, Helen Harcourt has been saying to herself, 'And I shall see Anne Drummond again,' and yet you would dare to disappoint her. I am ashamed of you!"

She had now taken out Anne's bouquet and put her own in its stead, saying that Anne had insisted on giving her the prettiest, but that now she could not object to keeping it for herself.

"And I shall take yours to poor dear Hannah. She is so fond of flowers, and she ought to have something to console her for all the trials of patience that must be before her."

"Hannah won't wish for flowers while you are in the house," Anne answered, smiling. "She says you are the prettiest thing she has seen since—" Anne hesitated, and then added in a lower tone, "since Hope's mother left."

"Ah, but she says I must never expect to look so like an angel as she did," Julia said laughing, as she ran out of the room.

Dr. Campbell met her in the doorway, and asked where she was going.

"Going to try to be useful for once in my life. Anne thinks I was only made to be ornamental. I am going to nurse grandmamma."

"Thank you, my child," he said kindly. "But let me see you first," making her turn round to the light. "Well," he said, after looking at her for a moment, "you *are* a bonny lassie."

She dropped him a gay courtesy, thanked him with mock gravity for his good opinion, and then ran upstairs, her clear bird-like voice sounding through the house as she sang snatches of an old song.

The others set out immediately, Hope reflecting in silence on the contradictions in Julia's character,—so heedless of giving pain, and yet so ready to give pleasure.

It was so dark when they reached the Castle that Hope could see nothing of the grounds. But the size and venerable appearance of the house quite suited her taste.

It turned out that they had not kept the party waiting. Lord Harcourt had taken his sister a long ride to show her the beauties of the neighbourhood. They had missed their road, and had not returned till about five minutes before our party arrived.

Sir Charles and Lady Grant were in the drawing-room alone. Sir Charles was a fine-looking man. He wore his arm in a sling, the only remaining effects of the accident, of which honourable mention has been made. Both he and his lady received their guests with a hearty cordiality one could scarcely have expected from such

stately, proud-looking people. Hope was gratified to see the respect in which both her father and mother were held.

She was also much pleased to observe Mrs. Campbell's quiet propriety and self-possession of manner. She ought, indeed, by this time so far to have understood the self-respect and perfect simplicity of her step-mother's character as to have felt no doubts upon the subject. But as we have seen, Hope studied the characters of those around her with far less attention than she bestowed upon her own. And she had been all day tormenting herself with fears of witnessing in Mrs. Campbell the same fussy, servile obsequiousness which had often disgusted her in vulgar under-bred visitors at Denham Park. But two minutes' observation sufficed to convince her that all such fears were groundless. Mrs. Campbell was as much at her ease as if she had been sitting in her own dining-room, and conversed with as perfect freedom and frankness as if her own husband and girls had been her only auditors.

Hope had barely time to observe this before Lady Harcourt's entrance turned her thoughts into a new channel, and engrossed all her attention.

She was disappointed in that lady's appearance ; she was much graver and older-looking than she had expected to find her. Hope knew she was little more than nineteen, but she looked at least thirty. She had a fine, intellectual, thoughtful face, but it wanted animation. The expression was good, but was too changeless.

In greeting Doctor and Mrs. Campbell, Hope observed

the same curious mixture of particular regard and general stateliness, which had struck her in Sir Charles and Lady Grant. Towards herself the stateliness predominated, and even towards Anne, Hope thought there was very little of the warmth she had been led to expect. But then Hope did not feel, as Anne did, the hearty pressure of her hand ; she did not look, as Anne did, into those eyes beaming with affection and pleasure.

Lady Harcourt sat down between the two girls, and gave each an equal share of her conversation and attention. But her hand rested quietly on Anne's knee, and was fast clasped in one of hers, and its frequent earnest pressure told the latter her presence was remembered and rejoiced in, even when her friend had turned from her.

Lady Grant asked if Lord Harcourt and his sister were nearly ready for dinner.

Her husband, Lady Harcourt said, would be down immediately. But Miss Harcourt was so much fatigued with her long ride, that she had advised her to lie down to rest, and to have dinner sent up to her.

"She was afraid you might think her rude," she added, addressing Mrs. Campbell ; "but I told her you were far too old and intimate a friend to take offence easily."

Of course, Mrs. Campbell assented heartily ; and Lady Harcourt, turning to Anne, said in a low voice—

"She is nearly as anxious to see you as my George, and I am so impatient to introduce you to him."

The gentleman's entrance prevented Anne's reply. He was a very pleasing-looking young man, a great contrast to his wife, being as much younger-looking than his

real age as she was older, and as frank, joyous, and animated as she was calm and reserved. Having paid his respects to the elder part of the family, he turned eagerly to speak to his wife's friend.

"How disappointed he must be," Hope thought scornfully, as she observed his eagerness, and remembered Lady Harcourt's half-whispered assertion of his impatience to know this plain, commonplace-looking girl.

But apparently Anne had been accurately enough described to him. His expressive face gave no sign of surprise or mortification, and sitting down beside her, they began to converse at once, like old friends, evidently much to Lord Harcourt's satisfaction ; and he remained beside her until they were summoned to the dining-room.

I ought to have mentioned the presence of two young nephews of Lady Grant's, who were staying at the Castle. One of these, Mr. Grahame, sat next Hope at dinner ; he was about her own age, gentlemanly and intelligent, but very shy, as most lads of his age are. He did his best, however, to entertain his companion ; but she was not entertainable. As is usually the case with very shy people, his first attempts at conversation were rather silly ; and Hope set him down as a stupid, awkward boy, whom it was by no means worth while to attend to. She thought herself very unfortunate to have such a dull companion, and never reflected upon the discomfort his shyness caused him, nor thought of exerting herself to relieve him, and to second his praiseworthy attempts at overcoming his enemy.



It happened that Anne sat on his other side, and before dinner was half done, Hope was surprised to hear her engaged in an animated conversation with him. How could the quiet, silence-loving Anne have found anything to say to such an uninteresting being? How could she have contrived to animate him into such lively discourse as he was now holding with her?

Very easily, my dear Hope. You have yet to learn the strength that lies in self-forgetfulness. Anne never thought about herself, or about her love of silence; she only saw that her young neighbour was feeling awkward and uncomfortable, and exerted herself to set him at ease and to amuse him. Having once begun a conversation, her mind still continuing free from self-consciousness, she was able to direct all its energies to find out from his answers what subjects were most likely to please him, and upon what topics he could most easily talk.

And her labours were rewarded with complete success. The young lad was well read, and clever. He had travelled with an invalid father, for two or three years, through the most interesting parts of Germany and Italy. He had a real genius for painting; and when his enthusiasm made him forget himself, and everything except his subject, he talked not only animatedly, but very delightfully.

When the ladies went up-stairs after dinner, they found Miss Harcourt waiting for them in the drawing-room. She was a gentle, attractive-looking girl, and seemed to entertain the warmest love and admiration for her sister-in-law. Like her brother, she showed a

strong interest in Anne, but she appeared anxious to leave Lady Harcourt to the full enjoyment of her friend's society, and for that purpose devoted herself almost exclusively to Hope.

This was not what Hope had expected or wished for. As I have said, she had heard a great deal about Lady Harcourt, and had conceived a high estimate of her mind and character. She had set her heart upon enjoying her conversation, and had formed a very pleasant picture of the impression she might herself make upon one whose good opinion was so well worth obtaining.

Disappointed in this, and jealous, even envious of the despised Anne, she felt little inclination for conversing with any one else. She looked with a kind of listless indifference over some fine books of engravings, which Miss Harcourt brought forward for her amusement, and with which at another time she would have been greatly pleased. She hardly attended to her companion's remarks ; her replies were as short and discouraging as possible, and, in short, she made the task of amusing her as irksome and disagreeable as it could well be.

She had no intention of doing so. On the contrary, she would have been very well pleased to have made a good impression even upon Miss Harcourt ; but she had no control over her mind, and suffering it to get filled with the thoughts of her own disappointment, she had not leisure to think of anything else.

The gentlemen were not long of following the ladies, and Lord Harcourt at once took up his position beside

Anne and Lady Harcourt—a position which he retained through the rest of the evening.

Hope was seated not far from them, and watched with a kind of jealous curiosity, the liveliness and animation of their conversation. Her own companion observed this, and thinking perhaps that she had at last found a subject to interest her, she began to speak of Anne, and of Lady Harcourt's affection for her.

"She must be an uncommon character, I should think," she said; "my sister says she never saw any one so simple and straightforward, so free from every taint of selfishness, not merely from self-seeking, but even from self-thinking, self-remembering. Helen says she is just the kind of character one feels that one can rest upon, and be under no anxiety or doubt as to how she may feel or act under any circumstances. And a character upon which Helen rests, can be no common one."

Anne an uncommon character! This was quite a new idea to Hope. Lately she had been thinking her kind and gentle, and altogether a more agreeable person than she had at first fancied her to be; but commonplace, grave, and dull, were still the terms that would most readily have occurred to her, had she been asked to describe her.

In her surprise she did not well know what reply to make, and was glad when a call to her companion from the other end of the room, saved her from the necessity of answering at all.

She was thus also left at leisure to listen to the

lively interesting conversation of the trio beside her. It seemed to take a wide range of subjects ; art, literature, and science, were all receiving their share of attention ; and, to Hope's surprise, Anne seemed quite at home upon all.

Hope knew that Lord Harcourt was distinguished both for talents and acquirements, and that on the matters they were now discussing, he was regarded as a kind of oracle. She knew that Anne was also quite aware of this, and yet she was talking to him with as much fluency and ease, as if she had been speaking to silly Walter Morrison about his flowers. She was often, it is true, with a becoming modesty, asking for information, and deferring to his opinion ; but at other times, with equal modesty, but with spirit and decision, she was maintaining her own arguments against his, and even on one or two occasions forcing him to acknowledge himself vanquished.

Hope could not understand it. Could this be the Anne whose whole time seemed taken up with the most commonplace occupations—the Anne whom she had looked upon as a mere household drudge ?

That she was the Anne whose kind thoughtfulness was ever on the watch for the comfort of others, Hope had good proof. It was she who first found out that Hope was sitting alone and silent, and she seized the first opportunity to draw her into their circle.

Lord Harcourt mentioned a German author whose works Anne had never seen. But Hope had, she said, and she turned appealingly to her. Lord Harcourt

turned to her also, and in his frank, courteous manner, asked her opinion.

This was an opportunity such as Hope had been longing for. But now that it came, she could not take advantage of it. Full of anxiety to say quite the right thing, full of fear lest she might say something foolish, she could not collect her thoughts sufficiently to know what her opinion really was. She blushed, hesitated, looked awkward, and at last expressed herself so vaguely and confusedly that it would have been difficult to find out exactly what she meant. The consciousness of this weighed upon her mind, and prevented her from recovering her self-possession. She brooded over it, instead of attending to what was passing, and consequently became more and more embarrassed, and less and less able to acquit herself creditably.

Lord and Lady Harcourt, with all possible courtesy, took care that she should not be again shut out from the conversation ; but she had the mortification to perceive that they looked upon her as a mere school girl, and that politeness and not interest induced them to address her. And she had the mortification of feeling that she well deserved it.

She could not get over it through the whole evening. In their drive home she tormented herself going over and over everything that had passed, seeing with tenfold clearness the folly and stupidity of her own words, and imagining the brilliant and striking things she might and ought to have said.

The contrast between herself and Anne deepened the

mortification. And then came the startling question, why should it be so? Why should she feel more pain in her own failure from the knowledge of Anne's success? And burning blushes rose to her cheeks, and bitter tears to her eyes, as she was forced to confess that envy, mean, base envy, had taken up its abode in her heart. She leant back in the dark corner of the carriage, and suffered her tears to flow without restraint. She felt bitterly depressed in spirit, and debased in her own esteem.

But even then she was far from getting to the root of the mischief. She was far from perceiving that her self-seeking, self-referring habits were the cause of all the stupidity she had shown, as well as of the envy she had felt. Nay, even then, the same fault was tainting her just self-reproach. She wept, not because envy was a sin in God's sight,—was a breaking of His commandments of love, but because it lowered her in her own eyes, and banished the pleasant self-complacency she delighted to foster.

Further, this same selfishness led her to indulge in her own sad thoughts, without the least regard to the feelings of others. She would not exert herself to give other than such cold short answers to their kind inquiries about her enjoyment of the party as effectually checked any further attempt of the kind, and filled her good mother's mind with anxiety and disappointment on her account.

Mrs. Campbell had seen how much Hope had liked the prospect of this evening, and she was much vexed to think that the hopes she had formed should have been so completely disappointed. She thought also that the

langour and depression of spirits, under which Hope evidently suffered, must be more deeply seated than she had suspected, otherwise it was impossible that one so young could be wholly insensible to the excitement and amusement of such a pleasant party as that they had just left. Such reflections made her as sad and silent as Hope herself. And as Dr. Campbell and Anne were no great talkers at any time, the drive was a very quiet one. And it was a very grave and even dull-looking party that descended from the carriage on arriving at home.

Julia came out to the door to meet them, looking as radiant with gaiety and beauty as she had done when in full dress, and full expectation of a gay evening. All her patient's crossness and unreasonable fretful demands had been unable to wear out her temper or spirits, or to banish the bloom from her cheeks, or the light from her eyes. Her laughing face, her dancing step, her cheery voice, made a striking contrast to the pale, depressed-looking Hope who walked by her side through the hall.

And yet Julia had tasted disappointment that evening as well as Hope. The difference was, that Julia's disappointment was now quite past, while poor Hope's had left a bitter sting behind.

The following morning brought disappointment to the whole family. From Ernest's last letter they had been hoping to see him even that very day. But instead of himself came a letter, saying that his sick companion was still too unwell to be left alone, and that his summons to his other friends had not reached them before they had set off upon a further round, so that it might

still be another week before he could start on his journey home.

This was a bitter disappointment to all. It was now almost the end of October, and early in November Ernest ought to be in Edinburgh attending his classes, so that every day's delay in his arrival shortened his visit by another day. But in the exertions each made to make up to the others for this disappointment, every one but Hope found the time pass pleasantly and quickly away, and the end of another week soon came round again.

To Hope that week passed drearily and heavily. She thought of no one's disappointment but her own, and upon it she brooded constantly. Dissatisfied with herself, she grew more and more discontented with all around, more and more unable to bear the little daily trials, and more and more unable to enjoy the little daily pleasures. Her step grew heavy, her eye dull, her manner listless and indifferent in the extreme. She seldom took any part in the conversation around her, showed no interest in what concerned the others, and then found fresh food for melancholy in seeing how often her presence was forgotten by the younger members of the family, and how unimportant, how useless she was to all.

The only amusement which broke upon the monotony of this week of waiting was a visit from Millicent Carnegie, who spent a day with them.

But even this pleasure brought disappointment in its train. We know how apt Hope was to estimate her friends by what they were to her, and not by what they were in themselves. We know also that she felt but



little interest in anything in which she had not the principal share.

In looking forward to this visit, she had, according to her usual custom, planned it all out. She had thought of many subjects she wished to discuss, of many things she wished to say to Millicent—subjects and things, I am sorry to confess, principally about herself, and her own concerns. And when matters turned out differently from what she had arranged, when no opportunity was given her for the conversations she had laid out, she felt provoked and disappointed.

Millicent was as amiable, sprightly, and entertaining as she had been on the day Hope spent at the Vale. But Hope did not enjoy her society as she had done then. Then, all Millicent's time and attention had been given to her. Now, it had to be shared with others. Then, Hope had been her only object ; now, she could not even persuade herself that she was the first among others. A little observation sufficed to show her that Anne's society was preferred to hers.

Hope did not reflect that this was very natural. She did not recollect that Millicent's acquaintanceship with herself had been of one day's duration, while she and Anne had been intimate for more than a year. It did not occur to her to ask herself what peculiar claims she had to Millicent's exclusive, or first regard. She only felt that all her hopes had been disappointed, and felt aggrieved in consequence. Again, the bitter pangs of envy wrung her heart, and were again succeeded by the still more bitter pangs of self-reproach and humilia-

tion. So that the mortification and grief which followed this visit far more than counterbalanced any pleasure it might in itself have yielded her. Her depression and melancholy settled down after it even deeper and blacker than before.

Her father and mother were becoming seriously uneasy about her. Her langour and listlessness were unnatural in one so young. Nothing interested, nothing pleased her, nothing seemed even to pain her.

All this was so different, too, from what they had been led to expect from Mrs. Denham's descriptions of Hope in her letters. She had always spoken of her as full of life and energy, always busy, always happy, and enjoying every little pleasure that came in her way. Could anything be more different from the present reality !

Mrs. Denham had particularly dwelt upon Hope's love of, and enjoyment in, the beauties of nature. And these now seemed feelings which had no existence in her mind.

There was one day in particular that Mrs. Campbell observed this. She, Hope, Anne, and Julia had all gone out to walk together. It had been a grey, still morning. There had been no sunshine all day, but the soft grey clouds were broken up with numerous patches of bright silvery light, which seemed to say, that his majesty had by no means made up his mind to veil his glories for any lengthened space of time.

It was the very day for a long walk ; no wind, no dust, and although the sun was absent, the air was so

pure and dry that all objects, both near and distant, had that sharp distinctness of outline, and that rich, clear, though dark colouring, which gives a peculiar charm to such grave days.

Our party walked briskly along the sea-shore towards the east, enjoying the healthy feeling of the air, and the pleasant crispness of the grass of the links under their feet.

After about a mile and a half's walk, they turned to come home, and then suddenly a scene of surpassing loveliness met their eyes.

Over the bay, far away to the north-west, lay a range of high hills ; above them now spread a strip of pale but bright blue sky, across whose upper margin stretched delicate lines of pearl-white clouds, shading off by slow, almost imperceptible degrees, into the grey mottled sky overhead. Where our walkers stood, the sun was still behind clouds, but upon this favoured spot he was pouring down partial streams of soft clear light, whose exquisite loveliness no words of mine can describe. On ordinary occasions, the hills seemed to be one unbroken ridge ; but under this peculiar light, all their inequalities and variety of outline were fully displayed. Here a rounded summit stood forward in its proper place, crowned with a glory of yellow rays. Behind it rose a high sharp ridge of that peculiarly dark blue which one may see perhaps not ten times in one's lifetime. There a field of brightly fresh green seemed to have attracted the partial rays by its own peculiar charms, and against its brightness stood out the trees of the wooded hill in

front, almost every branch seeming to tell against this glowing background. And below all, one or two stray beams had found their way to the water, and were shining on it with a gentle, chastened lustre, which was more pleasing to the eye, and more exciting to the imagination, than far more brilliant light could have been.

Mrs. Campbell and her companions stood still and silent, as if struck motionless and speechless by the exquisite beauty before them. Even Julia's volubility was hushed. She could not even exclaim upon the lovely sight. Anne seated herself upon a grassy bank, her back to the others, one elbow resting on her knees, her head supported by her hand, and her eyes fixed upon the spot, as if she never meant to remove them from it. She sat thus like a statue, without moving, scarcely seeming to breathe, long after the others had gazed their fill, and had passed on; and when she at last rose and went slowly after them, there were tears in her eyes, and her whole face seemed to shine from the feelings of happiness and peace the exquisite beauty of the scene had excited.

And Hope, nature-loving Hope, how did she feel? Like the others, her mind was at first filled with admiration and pleasure; but, before she had looked many minutes, the sad, self-pitying thoughts which had been occupying her through the whole walk, returned to their sway, the sense of enjoyment faded gradually away and was forgotten, and long, long before they reached home her countenance had resumed its dull, listless look, and one might doubt if the

least recollection of what she had seen remained in her mind.


Mrs. Campbell saw this, and gave a sigh, a patient little sigh, as she turned her thoughts to devise some new and more successful mode of interesting and amusing her melancholy charge.

Until Julia's return, she had always hoped that her lively disposition and frank manners might make her useful in rousing Hope out of her lethargy ; but she had been rather worse than better since Julia came, and now Ernest's arrival was the only thing to which she could look forward with any hope.



## CHAPTER XII.

### ERNEST.

 HE fallacy or reasonableness of such hope was now to be proved. Ernest was really coming. A letter was received from him on the Thursday morning announcing his safe arrival in England, and that he should be with them that afternoon.

The coach by which Hope had arrived had changed its hour, and did not now reach Mainton until past four ; and there was a little discussion about the going or sending to meet him.

Ernest had a particular fancy for walking home, they said, and he always expected a goodly company to go to Mainton to meet, and walk home with him ; and Mrs. Campbell looked at Hope to find out whether she might wish to be one of this company or not.

Mrs. Campbell thought that had she been in Hope's place, she should have preferred meeting this stranger brother for the first time in the quietness of home ; but Hope did not think so. In her impatience to see him, she naturally chose the plan that should soonest

bring them together, and eagerly declared her wish to go.

There was a little difficulty about it. The walk there and back was pronounced to be too long for her. Dr. Campbell could neither take nor send them exactly at the proper time, and Seaborough did not contain one carriage that could be had to hire. If they could find occupation or amusement for themselves for two or three hours, however, Dr. Campbell said he could take Hope and Mrs. Campbell in the forenoon ; and so it was decided.

As it turned out, their time of waiting was much shorter than they had expected, Dr. Campbell being detained, so that they did not leave Seaborough until past two, and were not much more than an hour too soon at Mainton.

This hour was passed very pleasantly at the house of an old friend and distant relative of the Campbells. She was a pleasant, gentle old lady, and showed such a warm interest in Hope, and so much pleasure in seeing her, as quite satisfied our heroine's love of importance ; and the time passed so quickly, that she was surprised when Anne and Julia called for them on their way to the coach-office.

They were just in time ; they had scarcely reached the place from whence a good view along the road could be obtained, when Julia exclaimed that she saw the coach, and the sound of the wheels was heard.

Hope's heart beat quick ; so quick that she seemed unable to see or hear. Now she was to see her brother,

her own, her long wished-for brother—now were all her hopes about him to be realized or disappointed. She grew nervous and agitated, and wished most earnestly that she had not come, that she were quietly in the dining-room at Seaborough. How could she go through such an agitating meeting in the public street? How could she have been so foolish as to come?

Nearer and nearer came the wheels, and quicker and harder beat Hope's heart. Her knees trembled so much, that she felt as if she could not have stood, if it not been for the firm, kindly support of her sympathizing mother.

The coach drew nearer,—stopped. She heard them say that he was on the box-seat. She felt rather than saw that he was getting down. A mist seemed before her eyes, a rushing noise in her ears. She was conscious that Anne and Julia drew back, that Mrs. Campbell led her forward, that her hand was the first he grasped, and she heard a voice of deep, tender feeling pronounce her name; but she felt that she could not look up, could not speak. She had not even seen him yet.

He had turned to the others, having first drawn Hope's trembling hand within his arm, and pressing it to his side with such a mixture of affection, pride, and pleasure, as made her heart beat quicker and higher still with happiness.

Presently her agitation began to subside. There was something in the firm support of the arm on which she leaned which seemed to quiet her. She ventured to



look fully at him ; and oh, what a setting to rest of all her fears, what a realizing of all her wishes did that first look give ! The fine manly figure, the bright, intelligent face, so full of energy and yet of gentleness, the beaming smile, the almost womanly sweetness about the mouth, and yet the bold, high forehead speaking of decision and intellect in no common measure, altogether made up a picture no one could be other than satisfied with.


Involuntarily Hope pressed her hand upon his arm in her deep thankfulness. He felt it, and instantly his other hand had grasped hers, his full, clear blue eyes were turned on her, beaming with affection, and again he said in a low tone, "Hope, *my* Hope."

The tears filled her eyes ; she felt as if she could bear no more of such full and perfect joy.

He had to leave them for a moment to see after his luggage. Before he went he put Hope's hand within his mother's arm, with a look that spoke equal tenderness for the one and confidence in the other, and the earnest pressure of Mrs. Campbell's hand as she supported the trembling girl, might have told how truly and deeply she felt with and for her.

When all necessary business had been gone through, they turned to walk home. Ernest gave his mother one arm and Hope the other, and so they set out.

Hope did not talk much ; she could not. But there was no want of conversation, and she listened to all her new-found brother said, with eager interest and heart-felt pleasure. For Ernest's every word, look, and gesture



were characteristic, and characteristic of one of the most happy, single-hearted, unselfish natures that ever breathed. Whether he were giving them lively and animated descriptions of what he had seen, whether he were expressing his happiness in being again at home, or asking the minute questions of true affection relative to everything connected with that home; every word he uttered seemed to come so truly and simply from his heart, and that a heart so full of every good and right feeling, that Hope could only be more and more conscious of her full happiness in having such a brother to love and to rest upon. Then he was constantly turning to her,—constantly looking at or speaking to her, and even while answering others, there were such frequent glances at her as told how much he was thinking of her and rejoicing in her presence.

Part of this peculiar pleasure must of necessity cease upon their arriving at home. There was then, of course, a good deal of bustle. The children had to be made of, and the boys' numerous interesting communications about school, pet dogs, cricket, &c., had to be attended to. Then Dr. Campbell came home, and engrossed a considerable share of his son's attention, and Hope was no longer so exclusively the first object with him, as she had been during their walk home. She must now take her place upon the same level as the others, and receive only an equal share of the thoughts and words of this hero of the hour.

She was not so unreasonable as to feel injured by this change, but she was very conscious of it, and was so

restless with planning, wishing, hoping for an opportunity of again getting him all to herself, that she could not remark, or enjoy as she might have done, the various indications of Ernest's amiability, which were constantly shining out in his intercourse with the different members of the family.

After tea Dr. Campbell had to go to visit a patient a little way out of town, and Ernest offered to accompany him, announcing his intention of calling to see his grandmother before he returned,—an intention of which both his father and mother cordially approved. Still confined to bed, and suffering a great deal from the effects of her accident, she was more fretful and more inclined to take offence than usual ; and Ernest being a great favourite, attention from him was particularly prized, and any inattention particularly resented.

After the gentlemen left them, the ladies gathered round the work-table. All were busy except Hope. For some evenings past she had been in the habit of reading aloud to the others. Having observed how much she had liked the occupation that first night she had proposed it to her, Anne had asked her so often to give them that pleasure again, that it had at last come to be an understood thing that she should do it every night. She did not always read with so much spirit as she had done that first night. Often she allowed her mind to go on with the train of thought she had been pursuing before she began, and so failed to enter into the meaning of what she read, or to give the proper emphasis. Still she was by habit an excellent reader,

with a pretty pronunciation, and a very pleasant voice. And the pleasure of being read to was so new to her auditors, that even a much worse performance would have been received with gratitude. Gratitude and praise, we know, were things much to Hope's mind, so that altogether the hour and a half thus spent were the most agreeable of the day.

But to-night neither reader nor listeners were disposed for their usual occupation. They were too much excited by Ernest's return, and had too much to say about him. So Hope sat idle on the sofa, happier than she had been for many a day, and feeling no distaste to her own want of occupation, or desire to share that of the others.

Anne's work was the only kind she could have wished to take upon her. It was for Ernest. Ernest was a great collector of all kinds of curiosities, and he had contrived to pick up some very fine foreign sea-weeds in his travels. These he had brought to Anne, with a petition that she would fasten them into his book for him.

As Hope was sitting watching Anne busy with this task, Julia, who, as usual, had three or four different pieces of work on hand, all requiring to be finished in an impossible space of time, turned suddenly round to her and said, "Oh, Hope, you are idle. I should be so much obliged to you if you would do this for me. The skirt of this gown of grandmamma's has all to be unpicked. I cannot think, mamma, what grandmamma means to do with the old thing. However, I undertook to unpick it, and as I have a great deal to do, I should be really very grateful if you would do it for me."

Julia's words promised gratitude, but her tone and manner expressed that she took it for granted her request must be complied with, and that she was rather conferring a favour on Hope in giving her work to do. Her mind was far too much occupied with her other tasks to notice the look of repugnance which Hope cast upon the skirt held out to her. But Anne saw it, and immediately proposed that Hope should take her work, and she should help Julia.

Hope rose with alacrity to accept the proposal. The work seemed light and pleasant in itself, and besides, it was for Ernest. And her pleasure in it was increased by Mrs. Campbell's remark that Ernest would like that Hope should do it for him.

Anne showed her what to do. Ernest was very particular in his arrangements. The finer specimens must be put in so that he could take them out when he liked, and look at them against the light. The coarser ones were pasted in, but those were only fastened by means of little diagonal slits in the page of the book, into which the corners of the specimens could be inserted.

Anne carefully sorted the two different kinds into two packages, and Hope began her task with confidence and pleasure.

But her mind was too full of the gratitude Ernest should feel when he knew that she had been so busy in his service. She did not give much attention to what seemed such an easy mechanical business. She was not at all accustomed to work of this kind. In her young days her picture-books had all been made for her ; her

broken toys or torn books replaced by new ones ; she had never practised, like other children, the various arts of pasting, stitching, and patching, and she knew nothing about them.

The first slits she cut with her knife, by the eye. They seemed correct enough until the specimen was inserted, when its straight continuous lines revealed their defects. They were not exactly opposite one another, and did not slant in the same degree. Even Hope could not think that her first attempt was successful, and she hastily turned over the page to conceal the fact from others.

But, alas ! the next page revealed a fresh mistake. She had put nothing below the page she had cut, and of course her knife had gone through. Julia's keen eyes at once saw what had been done.

"Dear me, Hope," she cried, in her quick startling tones, "you surely never could be so stupid as to cut without putting the card below your page, and Anne gave it you on very purpose !"

Hope coloured high with anger and mortification ; but Anne hastened to interpose. She could easily set it right, she said. And she chose out a very large specimen, which she advised Hope to paste upon the injured page, and so hide the slits.

"Still," Julia persisted, "they must be seen on the reverse side, and they must have gone through other pages."

Well, Anne said, she had plenty of large specimens to cover them all,—some she had got for Ernest

in the course of the summer, and she was going to seek them, when another exclamation from Julia stopped her.


Hope, in her confusion and ignorance, had been using the pasting brush very rashly. Large margins of wet paste extended round the specimen, and then, as she hastily turned over this page, it of course stuck to the one before it.

Tears of vexation rose to her eyes, when she heard Julia's free remarks upon her stupidity, and upon the irreparable mischief she had done to the book. Again Anne assured her it could be repaired. But Hope could bear no more failures, and hastily rising, she said resentfully, that if Julia thought she could do nothing right, she had better finish the work herself; and that as for her, she had plenty to do up-stairs in her own room, where she meant to stay until Ernest came home.

Mrs. Campbell kindly desired her to ring to get her fire lighted, if it were not already done, and Hope went up-stairs with a feeling of offended majesty.

Her thoughts were so much occupied with her grievances that she quite forgot her mother's directions and her own pretended business, and sat down to do nothing but muse and pity herself.

The happiness she had been feeling that afternoon was gone. She thought no more of Ernest, or of his affection for her. Every pleasant image had disappeared before those few provoking words from Julia. And she encouraged all the melancholy depressing



thoughts that came into her mind, and found a pleasure in making herself as unhappy as possible. It was the old story.

"I am alone in the world," she said ; "I have no one to care for me, no one to be pleased with what I do. Ah, mamma, dear mamma, you did not think me stupid ! You did not think that I could do nothing right."

And she encouraged her tears to flow, and exaggerated every sad thought and feeling. She was at last roused from this sorrowful reverie, by hearing the front door open,—a step crossed the hall and entered the dining-room.

Ernest had then come back, and she must get rid of all traces of tears, and go down to him.

Before she was ready to do so, the dining-room door opened again, and she heard him coming up the stairs. She supposed he was going to his own room, and was glad to have a few minutes longer to prepare for meeting the eyes of the whole family.

But Ernest was not going to his own room ; he stopped at her door, knocked, and came in. Hope rose to meet him.

"Mother told me you were here," he said, "and that you meant to come down when I returned ; so I thought I should come for you. I have so short a time to be at home, that I cannot afford to be without any of my home ones for any part of it."

"And I am sure I should not wish to miss your company, when I can get it," she answered with animated frankness.



He had come up to the fireplace, and stood beside her.

"But mother told me I should find a nice fire burning," he said, pointing smilingly at the black grate. "She said perhaps you might like me to stay here, and chat a little by ourselves ; but I cannot call that a fine fire."

Hope said something about having forgotten to order it to be lighted, and about not being cold.

"But you are cold," he said, taking her hand and pressing it between both his own. "And what were you doing so long in the dark ? I don't think you are fit to take care of yourself."

"I was thinking—thinking of many things," she answered in a trembling voice. "Of—of things that are past—of—of—" She could say no more. Tears choked her words, and she hid her face on his shoulder.

"I know, I know. My poor Hope, my dear sister," he said tenderly, putting his arm round her, and pressing her close to him.

It was all he said for some minutes. He allowed her to cry without interruption ; but when she began to recover herself and to look up, and try to smile at her folly, as she called it, he then, with even womanly tenderness and tact, drew her on to tell him all her thoughts, and to speak of those past days, and of her whose love had made them so happy and bright.

Hope spoke of Mrs. Denham as her ever-kind benefactress and tender mother. She dwelt upon all her love and goodness, upon the care she had bestowed upon

her, upon all the interest and sympathy she had felt in her concerns.

Ernest listened with the kindest interest and attention, encouraged her to go on, and entered into all her feelings and sorrows.

"She was not a woman," he said, "whose loss could be easily borne. She must have been a most fascinating being ; so much unselfishness and earnestness, such a tender, constant heart, such an unworldly mind. One does not often meet with one like her."

Hope listened in wonder, while Ernest went on describing Mrs. Denham. He seemed to understand and appreciate her character as well, nay better, than she did. Some traits of which he spoke, had escaped her observation, although she now felt that he was quite correct in ascribing them to her.

"But how do you know her so well, Ernest ?" she asked.

"Oh, I remember her quite well. You forget I was fully seven years old the last summer you and she spent at Seaborough."

"But yet at that age you could not study or understand her character as you seem to have done," Hope objected.

"True, but the impression of a very kind loveable lady was then fixed upon my heart ; and since then, my father and mother have taken care it should never be effaced. Why Hope, dear, did you think we were uninterested in one who was so near and dear to you ? We were constantly talking of her, and I was early taught

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to feel deeply grateful to her who was so tenderly caring for my dear little sister Hope."

He said the last words with so much fondness, and seemed to like so much to dwell upon them, that sweet tears of happiness rose to Hope's eyes, and she could not answer him. After a few minutes' pause, he went on—

"Then as to knowledge of her character, there were her letters, you know. She wrote every fortnight, and they were so characteristic. Delightful letters they were! She intended only to make us know and like you; but they also made us know and love herself. My mother used to read them to us, and used to take such pleasure in pointing out the fine traits of character, so unintentionally displayed in them. And then we used to congratulate ourselves upon the happiness of knowing that our own Hope was in such good hands."

Hope was still silent; she was thinking of the great contrast between the systems pursued towards herself, and towards Ernest, in regard to each other. While he had been taught to feel so much interest in her, she could scarcely remember ever hearing any mention made of him.

Another and more personal reflection kept her silent. Ernest's loving appreciation of the character of her good friend, made her for the first time conscious of the selfishness of her own way of thinking of her and judging her. She had loved her very truly, but that had been solely, or very nearly so, on account of her kindness and love to herself. Her love had never been pure or unselfish

enough to enable her fully to appreciate all the real beauty of her character in itself.

Such reflections were terminated by a deep sigh.

Ernest looked smilingly down upon her, as if to ask why she sighed. Hope was glad that the darkness prevented him from reading her face, or seeing the blush of shame upon it. She hastily proposed that they should go down stairs.

Ernest led her down, seated her in the warmest corner of the sofa, and sat down beside her, keeping her hand in his to warm it, he said.

"She is a disobedient girl, mother," he said laughing. "I found her sitting in the room without a fire."

"Poor child ! and this such a cold night ! I must look after you another time ; you are not to be trusted to look after yourself," and Mrs. Campbell looked with kindly interest upon her.

In the full blaze of the cheerfully lighted room, the paleness of her cheeks and traces of tears about her eyes were visible. Every one remarked them, and drew the kindest and most charitable inference from them. No one suspected how much ill-humour and selfish discontent had had to do in calling them up. It was not the habit of the family to seek for bad motives in the conduct of others.

Mrs. Campbell and Anne thought it very natural that Ernest's return should recall sad thoughts to her mind, and that sorrowful, as well as happy feelings might have been agitating her through the day.

And Julia, with more reflection than was usual to

her, recollected with bitter self-reproach, her free and unceremonious remarks upon Hope's manner of setting about her work.

"Her mind would be so full of Ernest," she thought. "No wonder she could not do it right; and my finding fault in that unkind way, would remind her of her not having been accustomed to his ways, and of her not knowing how to help him."

And Julia, with equal kindness and zeal, but with less tact than her mother and sister, exerted herself to banish all unpleasant thoughts, and to make Hope enjoy the pleasure of Ernest's company as much as possible.

Hope was that night very unexpectedly made aware of the nature of these sentiments towards her.

Julia and Anne's bedroom was in the oldest part of the house. It happened that the stalk of chimneys above it stood in need of repair, and they had come to sleep for a few nights in what had been the dressing-room to Hope's room. There had been a door of communication between the two rooms; but it was shut up, and so much hidden by furniture, that Hope had never been aware of its existence until this evening, when, as she sat down to read, the sound of the sisters' voices came so distinctly to her ear, that she looked round to find out the cause, and saw the upper panels of the door above a chest of drawers, just behind her chair. She moved to the other side of the fire, and continued reading for some time undisturbed, until the sound of her own name caught her attention, and she began involuntarily to listen, without considering whether they might wish her to hear or not.

Julia was speaking.

"Oh, I know quite well that, however provoking her stupidity and inattention might be, I ought not to have said what I did, still less to have said it as I did."

Anne's reply was in a lower tone, and Hope did not catch it; but Julia's clear, loud tones were distinct enough.

"Yes, I should have remembered how little accustomed she has been to make herself useful, poor girl! She could not know at once how to set about all these matters."

"We should remember, too," said Anne, "that she has never been used to have companions of her own age. She has always been the only one, and of course has been accustomed to have everything go just as she might like. We forget how little used she has been to the crosses and disappointments which members of a large family have to meet with and bear."

"Don't say we, Anne. You never forget to make allowance for her."

"Yes, I do indeed, Julia," Anne said earnestly. "You can't think how much I vexed her that first day she came. And I am sure I don't know why I did it. We had been thinking so much about her, and feeling so much for her. And when I saw her standing so sad and lonely in the large desolate-looking drawing-room, I felt as if I could have thrown my arms round her, and cried over her. But that would not have done, you know. I wished to make her as soon as possible forget that she was a stranger. And so, in trying to speak cheerfully and familiarly, I only spoke coldly and harshly,

and altogether, on that first day, gave her reason to think me a most interfering unfeeling creature. And I don't think," with a sigh, "she has ever got over that first impression."

"She might have, I am sure," Julia said hastily. "If she had the sense of a baby she might have seen by this time what you are. And you so good and kind to her, so anxious to help her in every way."

"Oh, don't say that, Julia," Anne said earnestly. "I don't do these things to make her love me. I don't wish her to love me for such things. I could do nothing if I were ever to take such a thought into my head, if I were ever to think of anything but simply helping to make her comfortable, or to save her trouble. I should not care at all for affection that could be bought by such services. I like to do them."

Hope's heart filled as she listened to these earnest words. And she whispered, "Good, kind Anne." She was for a few minutes engaged in recollecting the various services Anne was daily rendering to her; and felt equally surprised at their amount, and at her careless appreciation of them. And, while resolving to watch Anne more closely for the future, she again lost some part of the conversation. The next words she caught were from Julia, and about herself.

"I really wish to like her. But even you, Anne, must confess that she is quite wrapt up in self. So indifferent about everything, except what concerns herself, neither sorry at what grieves others, nor glad when others are glad."

"But, dear Julia, remember what a great sorrow is weighing upon her heart," Anne pleaded earnestly. "We cannot expect that she should feel much interest in other things. Ah, Julia, if mamma were taken from us, what a dreary blank the world would seem ! How little interest or pleasure we should feel in common daily things !"

"Yes, yes," Julia said in a low tone, and with much feeling.

"And then," Anne pursued, "you know Mrs. Denham was Hope's only one. She had none to love but her. Ah, such a sorrow may well overwhelm her, and make her seem cold and indifferent !"

"It could not have made you cold or indifferent, Anne."

"You don't know, Julia. I can fancy, in such circumstances, one's heart might feel stunned by such a blow, and it might be long, very long, before one could think of the duties one owed to others, or, indeed, of anything but the sorrow."

"But I do know," persisted Julia. "I have seen you in sorrow. When dear little Jane died, whom you so tenderly loved, you were not so stunned as to forget others, while you strove day and night to comfort and help us all."

"Oh, but how could any one do otherwise ? You were all in sorrow, and I loved you all. Poor Hope has no one to whom her sorrow is what it is to her ; and there is no one dependent on her for comfort or help. Poor, poor Hope ! Oh, Julia, we can never fancy how great her grief is. And it is only by seeing how



it has changed her from all Mrs. Denham used to describe her to be,—it is only by seeing that, that we can at all understand its depths, or feel for her as we should."

Hope heard no more. Conscience again took up the whisper it had begun during her talk with Ernest. Then, for the first time, that stern teacher had opened her eyes to the selfishness of her love for Mrs. Denham. Now it told her with startling distinctness that she was as far as possible from feeling such deep and tender sorrow as Anne gave her credit for. Selfish, restless discontent, more than sorrow, was the feeling which had been filling her mind, and making her so careless of every duty, so indifferent about the feelings of those around her. At first she had forcibly crushed down the true and heart-improving sorrow which God had graciously sent to her. In her selfish desire to exhibit a heroism of her own devising, she had wilfully shut her eyes to the lessons He had meant her to learn, wilfully shut her heart to the emotions He had meant her to feel. And the consequence had been, that all the nobler and higher sorrow had gone from her, and left her only the meaner and more selfish lamentations over the loss of a good which she had once enjoyed.


Hope did not as yet see all this quite clearly. She would not allow herself to see it. She silenced the voice of conscience by promises and resolutions to be more attentive to others, and more concerned for their happiness in the future. She would not allow him to show her the real extent of the evil, or the real magni-

tude of her faults and mistakes. But she soothed her heart to rest with self-praise for her candour in acknowledging even so much error, and for her brave determination to make amends. She allowed conscience to tell her that Julia's blame of her selfishness was just, and that Anne's defence was more favourable than she deserved ; but having heard so much, she would, for the time, hear no more, and went to sleep in a state of self-complacency very little less exalted than usual.



## CHAPTER XIII.

### BRAEHEAD.

N the following morning Ernest announced his intention of going to Braehead to see his grandmother, as he called Mrs. Maitland. And he asked if the girls could go with him.

Before they could answer for themselves, Mrs. Campbell told him that she had promised that he and the three elder girls should dine at Braehead that day.

"Your father and I are to be out at dinner," she said, "so we consented to spare you, if you are willing to go."

All expressed perfect willingness.

"My mother wishes you to be with her in the evening rather than earlier," Mrs. Campbell added, "for the sake of poor old Walter Howison. I told you that he was dying. He suffers terrible pain, but it always leaves him about five o'clock in the afternoon, and he will then be able to see you."

"I shall be glad to see him," Ernest said. "He was always very kind to me. I have a real affection

for him, and I suspect there are few can say as much. He never was popular."

"No; that is the reason we are so anxious you should go to him. He will see no one except his nephew, who takes care of him. Young Walter says his uncle is in terrible distress of mind, that he knows he is dying, and feels that he is not ready to die. But he absolutely refuses to see his minister, and says that he will speak to no one about his fears, unless he can see you. So of course we are anxious you should go as soon as possible."

"And we shall have a delightful walk," Julia cried joyfully. "It will be such a good day to show off Braehead to Hope. I shall be so glad to show you Braehead, and dear grandmamma."

"Why, Hope, is it possible that you have never seen Grandmamma Maitland yet?" Ernest asked in great surprise.

Hope felt confused, and a little ashamed. She was very conscious that she had shown less interest about Mrs. Maitland than she ought to have done, less anxiety to know her than would have been becoming, considering her near connexion with the family. For some days after her return home the old lady had been unwell, and unable to receive visitors. And although, since her recovery, proposals of Hope's going to see her had been made oftener than once, she had received them so coldly and discouragingly, that they had never been carried out. In the light of Ernest's kindly sympathizing nature, Hope now saw that she ought to have felt very

differently from what she had done ; and she was silent from inability to frame any good excuse for her neglect.

Mrs. Campbell came to her relief. She said, and said truly, that the walk was rather long for Hope, and that often when Dr. Campbell was going, and could have taken her, he had so many visits to pay afterwards, that it would have been inconvenient for her to accompany him.

“ And shall you not be able to walk to-day, Hope ? ” Ernest asked in a disappointed tone. “ It is such a delightful walk, and I had so counted upon having you with me.”

Mrs. Campbell said that Hope could walk there, and that they should have the carriage to bring them home at night ; but even this concession did not satisfy the young people. A walk from Braehead by moonlight was the most charming thing imaginable, and they all united in begging Mrs. Campbell to consider what a long rest Hope should have between her two walks, promising, at the same time, that if she felt the very least tired, they should ask for grandmamma’s carriage to bring her home. On such conditions Mrs. Campbell gave her consent, and about two o’clock they set out on their walk.

A lovely walk it was. Up that quiet picturesque lane which Hope had admired on the day she arrived at home, and across a wild, breezy common, over which the autumn wind was blowing fresh and bracingly, and on whose varied clump of hazel, broom, and whin bushes the autumn sun shone bright, cheery, and homelike.

Ernest was a most entertaining companion, so full of enjoyment, of intelligence, and spirit.

On their first setting out, he and Julia held a very amusing argument about their country acquaintance. Julia had plenty of wit and humour at command, and with diverting, but not ill-natured satire, described the foibles of the Morrisons, the Carnegies, and others, while Ernest with equal humour defended both them and their little weaknesses from her attacks.

Then their conversation took a graver turn, and Ernest gave them an account of his studies during the last session. Ernest was no common student. Ardent and enthusiastic in that, as in everything else, he carried to his work a quiet perseverance, which, grounded on steady principle, never failed. He was studying medicine, in compliance with his father's wish rather than with his own. His own inclinations would have led him to the Church ; but, having resolved to give up his wishes for his father's sake, he gave them up at once and for ever, and entered heartily and earnestly on the life he had determined to pursue. No half measures would do for him. The knowledge he wished and was resolute to attain must be neither moderate in amount, nor merely technical and superficial in kind. Whatever he was to be or to do must be as great and perfect as the whole energy of his decided mind could make it.

This earnestness of purpose gave a life and interest to pursuits which might otherwise have been not quite congenial to him, and insured success of no common measure.

But Ernest had no wish to speak of his successes. He only desired that the sisters he dearly loved should share with him in all the luxury of having new fields of thought and inquiry opened up for their pursuit. He did not think of himself as the clever, interesting teacher. He thought only of the beauty and riches of the stores of knowledge he wished to put them in possession of, and of their pleasure in gaining such possession.

He had always been in the habit of giving Julia and Anne instruction in the different sciences which had been engrossing his own attention, and with his help they had gained a fair knowledge of natural history, of botany, and its attendant science, vegetable physiology ; and latterly he had been instructing them in geology and mineralogy.

He had now much to tell them about his late travels in reference to all these matters ; and as he was as good a teacher as he was a judicious and intelligent observer, as skilful in divining what facts would interest his pupils, as in knowing what would be of use to himself, so he could keep up their interest and inform their minds without wearying them, or making his own hobbies appear tiresome in their eyes.

Hope, leaning upon his arm, and listening to his animated and spirited descriptions, was happier than she had been for many a day ; but not so happy as Julia and Anne, not so happy as she might have been, could she but have forgotten that there was such a creature as Hope Campbell in existence ; but while she had to reflect upon that same Hope's knowledge

of such and such objects—while she had to arrange so that that same Hope might make others aware of how much she knew, and how quickly she understood—while she had occasionally to spend a good many minutes in determining whether she might not have said something, or have left something unsaid, so as to give a better impression of her intelligence and sense, and so occasionally lost the most interesting and important part of the conversation—while all this had to be thought of, and planned, and settled,—her enjoyment of present pleasure could not be so keen, as it might and ought to have been, and numberless trifling disappointments must be constantly occurring to mar her pleasure.

But on this bright autumn day it seems a shame to say anything about disappointments. We should rejoice that our poor heroine is at least in some degree happy ; and we should shut our eyes to the little drawbacks she may experience from perfect satisfaction. And so we carry her up the pretty avenue of Braehead, with a lighter heart and a cheerier face than she has worn since she left Denham Park.

As the name implies, Braehead was at the top of a hill ; but while what might be called its own hill sloped down to the south and west, others higher than itself rose to the north and east, so that it combined the advantages of the pure air and commanding view of a lofty, with the warmth and shelter of a more lowly situation. I was going to call it a very pretty place, and so in truth it was ; but when at Braehead, I always used to feel more impressed by its great



pleasantness than even by its beauty. It was old-fashioned, of that fashion which had more regard to pleasure and comfort than to mere show. I always fancied that its original possessor must have been a comfortable, liberal, large-hearted kind of man ; one who liked to have the best of everything, and to have plenty of that best, both for himself and friends. Abundance was the first idea that presented itself to your mind, as you looked round the place—plenty of space, plenty of sunshine, plenty of air, were characteristic of both the within and the without doors, and plenty of many good things besides. No trees seemed to have such a luxuriant and healthy growth as the oaks, elms, and beeches at Braehead. No orchard for twenty miles round bore so many or so good apples and pears as its orchard did. No peaches or apricots were ever so large or so well-flavoured as those which grew upon the famous south wall of its sunny garden. And the pompous gentleman at the head of the gardening department of the Castle would have been very proud could he, any year, have produced roses, carnations, or stocks to equal those exhibited by the humbler Sandy at Braehead.

The appearance of the mistress of this fair domain was quite suitable to it. Not that there was anything ample in her figure or dimensions. Among her poorer neighbours she was often called “ Our little old lady ; ” but such a pretty little old lady, with such an air of quiet happy repose over her whole person, such an expression of serene benevolence, of placid contentment

in her face as suited remarkably well with the peculiarly sunny beauty of her home.

When I speak of Mrs. Maitland as being quiet and placid-looking, you must not fancy that she was one of those tormentingly mild, calm people, who are always smiling and contented, only because they have no strength or depth of feeling to make them ever be otherwise. You could not have supposed this for a moment, had you been in her parlour that bright autumn day, had you seen the heartiness of her welcome to her young visitors, the tremulous, almost tearful joy and affection of her greeting to Ernest, who was always a great favourite, and whom she had not seen for some months.

He on his part seemed equally glad to see her. \* There was something beautiful and touching in the kind of boyish simplicity of his manner, as he bent his tall manly figure to receive her kiss, and in the affectionate deference with which he, the cultivated, accomplished, and talented scholar, listened to every word uttered by the simple-hearted old lady, whose only wisdom was that which comes from the heart.

And it was a deference which it well became him to pay, her to receive. Yes, all honour, all reverence be to the single mind, the true, earnest, unselfish heart, which had carried you, gentle, humble, unassuming old lady, through the trials and labours of life, as no mere force or keenness of intellect could have done.

Mrs. Maitland was like her daughter in some respects ; but with as much cordiality and kindliness, she

had perhaps more gentleness than Mrs. Campbell, more quietude of character. One could not look at the beaming benevolence of her face, and feel any doubt that upon an emergency she could undertake and go through with any amount of active exertion, which the wants or happiness of others might require ; but active exertion did not seem to be so much her element as it was Mrs. Campbell's. One could not fancy her getting so quickly and cheerily through the manifold labours attendant upon the superintendence of a large household, as her daughter did. Perfect willingness might be there, but one felt that strength of body or of mind might be wanting. To sit in her sunny parlour enjoying her books, her flowers, and her birds, seemed most congenial to her nature and taste. And very thoroughly she did enjoy them—very pure and discriminating was her love of the beautiful and the good—very loveable and very interesting did that enjoyment and appreciation make her.

Even Hope, the generally fastidious Hope, was charmed with her, and freely confessed to herself that Julia's earnest desire to show off such a grandmother was highly reasonable.

There was perhaps nothing more remarkable about Mrs. Maitland than the wide range of her sympathies. She seemed to feel for, and with, every one of whom she had ever heard. She asked Hope about her friends the Markhams, with the interest of one who had known them all her life, and with as full an understanding of their characters, although she had never seen one of

them, had never heard of them, except through Mrs. Denham's letters. And all Ernest's college companions seemed as familiar to her, as her own everyday acquaintances. She seemed to understand their various feelings, trials, and circumstances, as if they had confided in her all their lives.

Julia, always accustomed to speak her thoughts, laughingly remarked upon this peculiarity to Mrs. Maitland herself, when the ladies were left alone after dinner, Ernest having gone to pay his proposed visit.

"I cannot think, grandmamma," she said, "how you contrive to remember about all these people, or to keep up any interest in them. I should really like to know your recipe for it. I could quite fancy that it might be very pleasant to be always able to surround one's-self with an imaginary circle of dear friends as you do. Do tell me how you manage it."

"Indeed, my dear," she answered simply, "I don't manage. I don't think of managing anything about it. I can't help feeling a great interest in these young laddies Ernest tells me about, struggling on to win a fair and honourable way in the world. I don't see how any one can help wishing them well, and being anxious to hear how they are getting on."

"Well, but, grandmamma," Julia persisted, "every body does not remember about them as you do. Every body does not realize their position as you do. That is the art I wish you to teach me."

"But really, my dear Julia, I know of no art about it. I feel an interest in them, and that is all."

"But, grandmamma," Anne interposed, "did you always feel as much interested about people who were strangers to you, as you do now?"

"Why no, my dear, I did not. I used to be a selfish, thoughtless lassie, caring very little for other people's joys and sorrows. But I did not change, or try to change, from any goodness in me, but only from a wish to make myself happier."

"But how, grandmamma? Tell us all about it," Julia cried, moving nearer her grandmother.

"All about what, lassie? There is nothing to tell," she answered, looking a little puzzled.

"All about your changing from not thinking about other people, to feeling interested in them."

Mrs. Maitland smiled.

"You want a story, bairn, that is what you want," she said, stroking her hand kindly over Julia's hair.

"You want to set me a-talking about old days and old things, as you have so often made me do before."

Yes, Julia said laughingly, that was exactly what she wanted. She liked to hear about olden times, and besides, she liked to know that grandmamma had once been as selfish and thoughtless as she was. There was the greatest possible comfort in hearing that, she said. Because she should feel quite satisfied, could she only turn out a twentieth part as good as grandmamma was now.

The simple-hearted old lady took no heed to the implied compliment. Julia's questions had carried her back to her young days, and she began to speak of them in a

dreamy kind of way, as if she were living them over again, and were quite unconscious of speaking to any one but herself.

"Yes, I was a thoughtless, selfish lassie," she began. "The good old uncle and aunt who took me to their home and heart, when my father and mother had left me a lonely orphan, they loved me so dearly, they were so completely wrapped up in me, that perhaps it was natural I should think myself, and my concerns, the most important matters in the world. It might be natural, but it was not right. The more they loved me, the more I should have loved them. The more they cared for my happiness, the more I ought to have cared for theirs.

"So it should have been, but so it was not. From morning to night I sought my own pleasure, thought of my own pleasure alone. I was not an ill-tempered or wayward child. How could I be, when everything went so well with me, when every one sought to please me, and no one ever crossed my wishes? But I was selfish, wholly selfish.

"I was not happy in this selfishness. How could I be? God never meant His creatures to live for themselves alone, and none can be happy who do so.

"As I grew older, I began to understand this. I began to feel a restless craving to be of use to some one, to serve some one. I was as fond of my garden then as I am now. And when I walked through it, or worked in it, and delighted in its beauty, I used sometimes to feel bitterly that the very flowers fulfilled the end for which they were created better than I did, that they ~~ex~~

least by their beauty and fragrance gave joy to many a heart ; while I was seeking only to bring joy to my own, and careless about every one else.

“ But why should I go on so ? Why should I not even now begin to imitate my favourite flowers ? I was not at all clever. I never could distinguish myself in any way. I never could be like the rose, or the lily. But there were other humbler flowers which I might resemble.

“ I remember it was a lovely spring day on which such thoughts first struck me, and my eye fell upon my little favourite primrose. Other beauties might be fairer, might be more stately ; but I had always felt that none were to me more speaking than this little up-looking flower. It had always seemed to me to speak of a quiet, healthy cheerfulness. As its slender stalk rose so steadily out of its sturdy green leaves, it had an air at once upward-springing and unassuming, at once independent and humble.

“ Such could I wish to be. Such was I resolved to be. And I gathered a blossom, and placed it in my bosom, while I said joyfully, that henceforth my little favourite should be to me at once a teacher and an emblem.

“ But it was not so easy to learn its lessons all at once. Now that I began to watch myself, it seemed as if nothing could be more unlike my primrose than I was. To whose heart did I ever send a glow of pleasure, as it did to mine ? What company did I cheer ? What cloud did I ever try to charm away ? On the contrary,

how often did I sadden and distress all about me by a dull, gloomy dejection, for which I could assign no rational excuse ! How did I allow myself to fret, and mope, and pine, only because it rained when I wished for fine weather, or because the sun shone when my garden wanted rain ! And how much discomfort did this moping bring upon those two kind friends, who only lived to make me happy !

“ I thought how many trials and annoyances they must have, of which I knew nothing. How entirely it was my duty to be the sunshine of their old age. And yet how far was I from being so ! And how constantly, in spite of all my efforts, did I fail and sink back into my old selfish habit of thinking only of my own joys and sorrows, and being quite careless as to how far my mood of mind was suited to theirs, or not. I did not seem to make any progress in getting the better of it, and I did not see any new or better way of doing so.

“ In this difficulty I applied for advice to the one dear friend of my own age, which our quiet country neighbourhood afforded me.

“ Anna Harley. Her name sounds like music in my ear still. She was, in some respects, placed in circumstances similar to mine. She was, like me, the only young thing in her own home. She lived alone with her father. But in mind, she was very different from, very far above me. I never saw any woman who had such an intense thirst for knowledge, such a power of acquiring it. Learned women were very rare in those days, and very unpopular. But no one thought of dis-



liking or despising Anna for her learning. No one could think it unbecoming, that the only child should seek to enter into the pursuits of her widowed father.

"I always went to Anna in any distress or difficulty, and I always found her ready to sympathize with me, and to advise. In my present trouble she could not understand my feelings from having shared them. For she was the most devoted daughter, and always sought her father's peace and happiness far before her own. But she had the art of entering into, and understanding the feelings of other people ; I think, because she gave her full attention to the matter. At any rate, she fully entered into mine, and strove to strengthen my resolution, and to help me to keep it.

"I could not be happy, I told her, unless I could make others happy too. I was pining with the restless wish to add to the happiness of some one. And yet, whenever I tried, some mean selfish thought or wish came in, and spoilt my very best efforts. How could I get out of myself ? I asked her. How could I learn the art of helping others ?

"I must get some occupation for my thoughts away from myself, she replied. I had often told her, she said, that she was more self-forgetful than I could ever be. If it were so, she could only ascribe it to the fact, that she had so much to think of, from her many studies and her favourite books.

"But then I was not clever, as she was. I could not occupy myself with books as she did, I said.

"But I could with flowers and birds and beasts. I

loved them all dearly. I might learn more about them, and interest myself in observing their habits and natures. Anything would be useful, that could make me forget myself, and my own little concerns and cares.

"I felt that this was a happy suggestion. And still happier was the next, that I should teach myself to study people. I had always had a taste for such study. And if I were ever to learn to help others, of course I must first learn to understand them. I must learn to know what they had to grieve or please them, to know how they felt, or were likely to feel.

"And from that day I began to look out upon other people's characters and circumstances. And I soon found that no study in the world could be more interesting, no knowledge so useful.

"So you see, my dears, the end to my long story is simply this, that if I do take more interest in those around me than some other people, it comes from no goodness in me. I was driven to it from a mere desire for my own happiness."

"Yes, grandmamma," said Julia, "but—" she stopped, and looked archly up in her grandmother's face.

"But what, my dear?"

"But there are not many people who can only find their own happiness in the happiness of others."

Again the implied compliment fell off, from the old lady's simplicity of thought and feeling.

"Believe me, there are more than you think, my child," she said earnestly. "Perhaps people don't know

it so well as I was made to know it. But that was because my great selfishness had first made me more unhappy than less selfish people can ever be."

Here Ernest's return interrupted the conversation. He was looking very grave and sad, very unlike himself. He came in silently, and sat down beside Mrs. Maitland without even looking round. He seemed scarcely to remember that any one was there.

They all looked at him inquiringly, but no one cared to break the silence until he chose to do so himself.

He had rested his elbows on his knees, and had hidden his face between his hands, apparently absorbed in deep and most painful musings. After a few minutes he seemed to rouse himself, with a deep-drawn sigh, and sat up in his chair. Mrs. Maitland laid her hand soothingly on his arm. He took it in both his own, and began to stroke it in an affectionate but absent manner. Then Julia spoke ; she could bear silence no longer.

"Did Walter know you?" she asked.

He started at the sound of her voice as if suddenly awakened from a painful dream.

"O yes, he knew me quite well," he answered. "He has perfect possession of all his senses. But, oh, how changed he is ! And in such deep sorrow,—more than sorrow,—despair. Oh, grandmother, I never saw it before. It is terrible to witness."

And he quickly withdrew his hands from hers, and again buried his face between them. Another long, silent pause followed. Ernest seemed unable to com-

pose himself. When he at last removed the shade from his face—no shame to his manhood—there were tears on his cheek.

He began gradually to tell them what had passed.

“He was sleeping when I went in,” he said, “and I sat down beside his bed to wait until he awoke. He is so much changed, I thought I should scarcely have known him. I could scarcely believe that he was the same man I had seen six months ago, so hale and hearty, so strong, so proud in his strength.

“His sleep was troubled, and very soon he awoke. He stared wildly for a moment, but recognised me almost immediately, and smiled, and held out his hand to me, his poor, wasted, feverish hand.

“‘I am glad to see you, Master Ernest,’ he said. ‘You are the only being on the face of the earth that I have ever loved, except myself, and I feel a better and a happier man while I have you beside me.’

“I did not know what to say. I could not contradict his implied self-blame. Even when I was a mere child, I had known, and been proud to know, that I was the only creature he cared for. And since I have come to understand better the sinfulness of his misanthropy, I have been only the more deeply conscious of it.

“I said that I was sorry to hear that he suffered so much.

“‘That is nothing—nothing,’ he answered ; ‘but do you know that I am dying, and dying without hope. Without hope,’ he repeated in a slow, deliberate tone, fixing his keen grey eyes upon my face.

"I was startled at his entering upon the subject so suddenly. He had always been such a reserved man. As steadily as I could, I said, that he sinned against the Lord's grace who said that he was without hope so long as he was on this side the grave.

" 'Ay,' he answered with an indescribable kind of scornful bitterness against himself. 'And what hope can there be for such as I am? Self has been my god all my life long, and shall be to all eternity. That shall be my punishment, and truly one greater than I can bear. Think,' and he grasped my hand with painful vehemence, 'think what it must be to have only one thought, one craving for ever and ever, and that a craving that can never be satisfied! I have pleased self and exalted self here; there I shall never, never cease to desire to do so, and never, never have the smallest hope of getting my desire.'

"I scarcely know what I said, words seemed so useless. But I said something about its not being yet too late. He interrupted me almost fiercely—

" 'You do not know what you say. As the tree falls, so it lies. What is there in death to change me?'

" 'Nothing in death,' I said eagerly; 'but everything in the grace of God.'

" 'And what is there in me that I should get that grace now?' he asked in that peculiar bitter tone.

" 'Nothing, oh, nothing in you. But all in the Lord. It is for what is in Himself that He saves us, not—' He interrupted me.

" 'Oh, I know what you would say. Don't I know

it? I know that His grace is free. As free as His sunshine or His air. But as we must open our lungs to breathe the one and our eyes to see the other, so must we open our hearts to let in His grace.'

"But, I said, these are the mere creations of His will. He is our Creator. Our Saviour is the Lord, the living God. He can open hearts for Himself.

" 'None can open my heart,' he said, almost sullenly; 'it is dead.'

"But it is He who quickeneth the dead, I cried eagerly.

" 'Well, I am worse than dead. The dead cannot oppose. I am God's enemy.'

"Christ died for the ungodly. While we were yet enemies, He died for us.

" 'These ungodly, these enemies, at least wished to be saved. I have no wish, no desire, no feeling except of despair—despair ;' and he turned away his head, and the whole bed shook with the convulsive tossings of his limbs.

"Oh, grandmother, it was terrible ;" and again Ernest hid his face in his hands.

"And could you give him no help?" she asked, the tears running down her cheeks.

"None. I tried to speak of the Saviour's love, but he stopped me, starting upright in bed, and crying out wildly—

" 'And that Saviour I shall never know. And that God, such a God I shall never see—never, never love ;' then sinking back, he said more quietly—

"Ernest, you must say no more—not to-night at least, I cannot bear it. Come again as soon as you like ; but no more to-night."

"At least, I said, let me pray with you."

"'Pray for me if you please. I cannot pray. You are a good lad,' he added, laying his hand upon my head, as he used to do when I was a boy. 'You are a good lad, and would fain do me good, but you cannot. Perhaps I can do you some. Take warning by me, and never be tempted, even for an hour, to think slightly of others. I thought it was a grand thing to be above every one, to depend upon myself alone, and despise every one else. Fool that I was ! The poor idiot, in the dale down there, is above me, in as far as his only rational thought is love for his mother.'"

"And you did pray ?" Anne asked.

"Yes, I did. And I got a faint glimmer of comfort from this slight circumstance. In my prayer I used the expression, that we had no plea to bring why the Saviour should help us, except this one, that without Him we were lost ; that if He did not help, none else could. And as I said it, I felt him start, and take hold of the bed-clothes with an earnest kind of grasp, as if he were moved by what I said. But when I bent over him, in coming away, and said with tears, 'O Walter, may the Lord himself help you,' he took my hand, and answered with strong emphasis, 'That is a prayer that will never be answered.' And so I left him."

"But," said Julia, after they had all been silent for some minutes, "I always thought that Walter was a

really good, I mean a religious man. The neighbours used to think him too strict."

"But his was a self-religion," Ernest answered. "His nephew said something of the same kind to him, and reminded him how much he used to read his Bible, and how he used always to pray three times a day. But he interrupted him sternly, even harshly, and said that all the religion he had ever had, had only been in order that he, Walter Howison, might be able to esteem himself. He had worked himself up to a certain amount of feeling towards God, because he knew such was required of every good Christian, and such a Christian he wished to feel himself."

"I think, Ernest," Mrs. Maitland said, "it was a good sign his asking you to come back."

"Yes; he pressed me very earnestly to come to see him again—to come every day."

"But you cannot go every day. You cannot go often at such an inconvenient hour," Julia objected.

"No; but he told me that as his strength decreases, so does the length of the paroxysms of pain. He says he can see me any day after three. And I promised that I should go to him every day at that hour, unless some unforeseen event happen to prevent me."

"And no fine plan or wish of ours will be able to prevent you," Julia said, with an affectation of discontent.

"You, I am sure, do not wish that it should," he answered, smiling.

Whatever Julia did or did not wish, she was at least



anxious to divert Ernest from the melancholy induced by his sad visit. And for that purpose she began to engage him in a half-sportive argument about Walter's misanthropy.

"Everybody knows," she said, "what a superior man Walter is. Why, you might go through all Scotland, and England too, before you could meet another in his rank of life with such a mind and such education as he has. No one can deny that he is greatly above those whom his circumstances might have made his equals. And that he should despise them, and wish for no communion with them, seems to me perfectly natural, and only a token of his superiority to them."

"Superiority of what?" Ernest asked quietly.

"Superiority of character."

"No, Julia, you go too far. Superiority of intellect, perhaps, but not of heart. And whether the heart or intellect should take the higher rank, I leave you to decide."

Julia would not give up. There ~~was~~ something grand, she said, in a man like Walter. One who could go through the world dependent upon no one. Let Ernest say what he liked, self-dependence was a great thing.

"Self-dependence, yes; self-worship, no," he said quickly.

Hope came to his assistance. She grew eloquent upon the superiority of the qualities of the heart over those of the mind.

"The poor untaught child," she said, "who gives

himself to dry tears from the eyes, or to keep sorrow from the heart of another child like himself, is, in doing so, superior to the wisest man that ever lived, if that man has never done anything to benefit his neighbour."

"Well, well," was Julia's half-laughing answer. "It is all very fine, I daresay. But still when one so often fails in doing the good one wishes to do, I don't see that one is much the better for all one's trying."

"Oh, yes, certainly the better," Hope said enthusiastically. "Even when we fail altogether in doing the exact good we wish to do, our own heart is the better and happier, and often, too, the heart of those we have tried in vain to serve."

"Not the happier, Hope. One cannot be the happier for failure."

"Not for the failure, but for the trying."

Julia slightly shifted her ground, and asserted that even where we did succeed, the success was so small, it often gave one more pain than pleasure.

Hope strenuously denied it.

"Do you not think," she asked earnestly, "that the poor mother Ernest spoke of is well repaid for all her devotion to her idiot boy, as she sees the one right good feeling she has been able to plant in his heart, even although she can do no more for him?"

"Ah," Ernest said thoughtfully, "your theory is right, Hope, but not your illustration. I believe she is a good mother to her afflicted child. But his love is too pure and holy to have been the work of human hands, too unselfish to be the mere fruit of kindness

shown to him. God himself has planted that feeling in the darkened mind, and has, it seems to me, made it so strong and pure, in order to make amends for all else."

Ernest's words about the unselfishness of love, recalled to Hope what she had overheard Anne say the preceding night, that she did not care for affection that was purchased by kindness ; and recalled the vague glimmering consciousness which had then visited her, that she had never as yet known much of any love more unselfish than this. She could not immediately join again in the conversation, and the discussion was dropped. Her mention of the idiot had caused a diversion from the original subject, and Ernest took care to keep up that diversion. He knew that Mrs. Maitland's frame was as delicate as her heart was tender, and he did not wish her to dwell longer upon the sorrowful scene he had described.

The party did not stay late. Considerate Anne suggested, that as Hope was quite unaccustomed to night walks, she might feel the cold too much if they were late ; and soon after nine they began to prepare for departure.

When the girls came back to the drawing-room to wish Mrs. Maitland good-night, Ernest suddenly remembered that he had not seen Sandy, the old gardener. And he declared his conscience would not suffer him to sleep unless he went to see him. Julia and Anne accompanied him, and Hope was left alone with Mrs. Maitland.

She had taken a great liking to the gentle old lady. She had been struck with her little primrose tale, and now, as she sat looking at her clear, serene brow, she thought that the emblem was well chosen, and that, perhaps, no flower in the garden could have typified her better.

Mrs. Maitland interrupted her meditations by laying her hand kindly on her shoulder, and saying in her gentle yet earnest tones, "I was so glad, my dear, to hear you speak as you did about poor Walter's misanthropy. When you first came you were so silent and sad, and seemed so little interested in what was passing around you, that I did a little fear you might be one of these self-brooding people who never can be happy."

"I have had much to make me sad," Hope said softly, for the old lady's great gentleness prevented her from being at all offended at her words.

"True, my love," she said quickly. "And I ought to have remembered that, and not have imputed your gravity to less worthy, less reasonable grounds."

Again conscience renewed his last night's reproaches, and told Hope how little genuine sorrow had to do with her gloomy self-abstraction. She had not leisure to attend to the reproof, for Mrs. Maitland began to speak to her of the dear friend whose loss she had to mourn. And by her kind and intelligent sympathy, she led Hope on to speak of all her goodness with both eloquence and pleasure. When the others returned, they found Hope sitting with her hand clasped

in Mrs. Maitland's, and the traces of tears on the faces of both.

"How delightful it is to meet with genuine sympathy," Hope thought, as she walked silently by Ernest's side ; "how much good it does the heart !"

Ah, dear Hope, could you not recollect that truth sometimes when your sympathy might, perhaps, bring warmth and softness to the hearts of others ? It is a cheap way of doing good.

Perhaps Hope is now getting a little into the way of recollecting such truths as these. During the whole walk she is very silent, and her mind is dwelling with some uneasiness upon certain points in her own character. Pretty often the questions arise, Do I act as I preach ? Am I what I commend ? Do I avoid the errors I blame ? And she is neither able to answer them so satisfactorily, nor to dismiss them so summarily as she has done on other occasions.

"Why, Hope, how dull you are looking !" Julia suddenly cried, as a bright moonbeam fell on her face.

Dull ! What a word to apply to her ! Melancholy, sorrowful, she might have said. But dull ! Hope drew herself up, and felt injured and provoked.

But Ernest had turned to look at her with so much affectionate anxiety, had drawn her arm farther through his own, with so much supporting kindness, and had asked with so much tenderness if she were tired, that Hope's heart rose lightly again, and, in the happiness of feeling herself cared for, she forgot the pain of having been called dull.

Again I say, Ah, dear Hope, could you not take the lesson home? Could you not learn here how easy it is to give pleasure, how very easy to give pain?

Ernest kept his resolution of going every day to see Walter. He seldom went alone. When the weather was at all favourable, one, two, and sometimes all the three girls went with him. Hope had found, that with his strong arm to lean upon, the walk was not at all too long for her. She was always one of the party, and on several occasions Anne contrived that the brother and sister should go alone.

Hope enjoyed these walks much, more particularly the *tête-à-tête* ones. Ernest spoke so openly and confidently to her, that she was encouraged to speak more openly to him than she had, perhaps, ever done to any one else. She little knew what an insight she was giving Ernest into her character in these conversations, or how thoroughly she was making him understand all her weaknesses and defects.

But Ernest had the fullest patience with her. He studied her character with a tender kind of charity, which was one of his characteristics, and was ever ready to find excuses for all her faults, in the peculiar circumstances in which her early life had been passed. He never tried to lecture her out of them. Lecturing could only direct her attention more in upon herself, and what she required was to have it led out to other things. Without ever seeming uninterested, or unsympathizing in her own peculiar concerns or feelings, he was constantly endeavouring to interest her in matters out of herself. And even

when they spoke about her feelings or position, he tried gently to lead her to look upon them in reference to other people, as well as in reference to herself.

His society was doing her great good. Her poor craving heart was set at rest by the perfect confidence she soon learned to feel in his warm love for her ; and thus set at rest, she was better able to see and appreciate the kindly feelings entertained towards her by the other members of the family. Her admiring love of Ernest was also more unselfish and elevating than any feeling she had ever yet experienced ; and so her cure went on strengthening itself. The more she admired him, the more she looked out for something to admire, and so became the less engrossed with her own character and circumstances.

In their walks home, the conversation always turned upon serious subjects. Ernest never took his companions into Walter's house. They waited for him either at Braehead, or in the cottage of an old woman who lived a little nearer Seaborough than Walter did. When Ernest joined them, he had always to tell them the result of his visit ; and from that the conversation often turned upon the more personal religious feelings of the young speakers.

Hope's religious education had been carefully attended to. She was well acquainted with all the doctrines of the Bible ; she felt much interest in the subject, and much delight in certain states of feeling, into which she could excite herself in regard to it. She had no doubt that she was a real child of God, both on account of that interest and delight, and because it seemed impossible

that she, the good, the admirable Hope Campbell, could be anything else.

This self-complacency was once or twice a little shaken by Ernest's descriptions of Walter's state of mind. His self-righteousness and self-dependence seemed to find an echo in her heart ; and she was once or twice a good deal startled to perceive points of resemblance between herself and the old man, whose faults she discerned more keenly, and blamed more severely than did the others.

Yes, Hope had less patience with Walter than had Ernest and Anne, whose characters were far more dissimilar to his than hers was. It seemed to her both foolish and sinful to entertain such doubts and fears as tormented him.

Ah, poor Hope, you do not understand that faith in the forgiveness of sin seems an easy attainment to one who has never felt sin's sinfulness. To believe in God's love to ourselves is easy enough, when we know little of our own depravity or His pure holiness. To believe in the possibility of our sanctification is not difficult, when we have never realized the utter corruption of our whole heart.

Sometimes when Anne and Ernest spoke of their own religious feelings, Hope was a silent and astonished listener. In much that they felt, she had little sympathy.

Their dread and jealousy of sin seemed to her almost legal and slavish. She did not know the difference between fearing to be eternally lost on account of our sins, and fearing by them to dishonour the Saviour who had



saved us from this eternal ruin. She could not distinguish between the desire to glorify Him in our bodies and spirits which are His, and the desire to work out a righteousness of our own.


When they spoke of the joy of the Lord's presence, she thought she could sympathize with them, because she often, by her own imaginings, wrought herself up to such a joy ; but when they spoke of the sorrow of having the Lord hide His face from them, that was a sorrow of which she knew nothing. Her religious life was smooth and equable, and she was inclined to think that the ups and downs of which they spoke were the result of some morbid and unwholesome state of feeling. She did not know how quickly God makes His own children feel and mourn for any turning out of His way ; and she thought that there must be something wrong in the feelings they described.

And yet conscience would not allow her to blind herself to the fact, that Ernest's and Anne's habitual state of mind was more healthy than her own ; and he often whispered the question, Is your religion as real, as life-giving, as fruit-bearing as theirs ? Is that calm on which you plume yourself the calm of healthy life, or of still death ?

So poor Hope's self-confidence is receiving almost daily shocks ; and although she has not yet quite made up her mind to let it go, yet she is beginning to admit the possibility, that all within her may not be so fair and perfect as she had once thought.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### REBECCA.

 HE first fine day after the one they had spent at Braehead, Ernest proposed going to see his father's nurse, Rebecca. Her house was certainly too distant for Hope to walk there and back ; but Dr. Campbell arranged to take her and Fanny in the carriage, and the rest were to go on foot.

Hope was a little disconcerted to find that the driving party and the walkers were to start very much at the same time. She did not like the idea of paying a visit to Rebecca alone, or at least with no more helpful associate than little Fanny. Like all egotistical people, she did not get on well with her inferiors. Thinking more of preserving her own dignity, or of showing her condescension, as the case might be, than of the feelings of those with whom she conversed, she was apt to be embarrassed herself, and to make them feel embarrassed also.

But she could not help herself ; she could only go when it best suited Dr. Campbell to take her. They soon reached the opening into the woods, where Dr.

Campbell had got out the day she had spent at the Vale. He handed them out, and then, as he was in haste, drove on, leaving Fanny to guide Hope to the cottage.

A narrow footpath through the wood led them to it. It was a pretty place. The wood receded from it, leaving an open sunny space in front, where the old woman had her neat garden. The cottage was white-washed and with its dark-coloured thatched roof, and windows as bright as hands could make them, it looked both picturesque and comfortable standing amidst the trees.

Fanny led the way straight into the kitchen, a picture in itself, with the spotlessly white floor, the well-rubbed tables and chairs, and brightly shining pots and pans. The one figure in the picture suited well with the minor details, and her occupation, spinning at the big old-fashioned worsted wheel, was as picturesque as any could well be. She looked up when they came in, and then with an exclamation, and a look of genuine pleasure, welcomed them, brought forward seats, and helped them to throw off some of the extra wraps which the cold autumn breeze had compelled them to wear in the open carriage.

At first Hope had no time for awkwardness. Fanny chattered incessantly, and Rebecca had numerous questions to ask about each member of the family.

They had not been long seated when a fourth was added to their party, in the person of Molly, Rebecca's granddaughter. She had been for two or three years nursery-maid to the little Campbells, and was much attached to them. Her father's cottage was on the

road-side before coming to Rebecca's. She had seen Fanny in the carriage as it passed, and guessing her destination, had come up to see her.

When she learned the number of the party her grandmother expected to luncheon, she volunteered to go home again for a better supply of fresh eggs and butter than the old woman's store afforded, and she asked Fanny to accompany her, in order to see the little bantam cock and hen she was rearing for her and Susan.

Fanny appealed to Hope for permission, and Hope could make no reasonable objection, although it was with many a secret misgiving that she saw herself left alone with Rebecca.

She had a kind of dread of her keen-eyed hostess. She had a vivid recollection of her manner and words upon their first meeting, and it was a recollection she did not like. She had always, in her own mind, classed Rebecca with Hannah, her grandmother's servant ; and from Hannah her self-complacency had received many a severe wound.

But Hope's estimate of the two was not quite correct. In shrewdness and penetration they might be a good deal alike, but there were depths of tenderness in Rebecca's heart, of which Hannah, with all her genuine, though often concealed kindliness, was not capable. Rebecca could speak stern truths, if she thought her duty required it of her ; but she had none of that pleasure in mortifying others that Hannah too often felt.

If Hope had looked more closely she might have seen in Rebecca's expressive, sorrow-marked face, a subdued,

chastened look, which Hannah's never wore, and which might have reassured her. But she saw only the quick, penetrating glances, every now and then cast upon herself by the old woman, as she moved briskly about her kitchen, baking for the dearly-loved Ernest his favourite scones.

When the said scones were fairly laid upon the girdle, Rebecca resumed her spinning in the intervals of attending to their firing ; and Hope's artist propensities caused her jealous dread to be somewhat forgotten, in admiration of the old nurse's picturesque appearance, as with her handsome face, upright figure, and quaint dress, she stepped backwards and forwards to the large old wheel, the pretty bright kitchen, with all its accompaniments of old-fashioned settle, three-cornered stools, cupboard of bright-coloured china, and girdle on the fire, forming a most suitable background to the picture.

Hope was taking a mental note of it all, with the vague intention of trying to transfer it to paper for Lucy Markham's gratification, when she was startled by Rebecca's saying, abruptly—

“ You have a look of your mother too, but you are not so like her as Master Ernest, God bless him.”

“ Is Ernest like mamma ? ” she asked, her interest at once aroused. “ I don't see much likeness to the picture I have of her,” and she drew out a little miniature, enclosed in a gold case, which she always wore.

Rebecca took it eagerly, and looked on it for some minutes in silence, the tears slowly rolling down her tear-marked cheeks, and her withered lips working with







Hope left with Rebecca.





emotion. It was not only sorrow for the gentle young girl whom she had indeed dearly loved, but that face recalled many another dear one, long since gone from her sight.

"The features are perhaps not the same," she said slowly, putting the miniature again into Hope's hands. "He has his father's features. But the free, frank, innocent look, the blitheness of his bonny blue eye, these are like his mother,—like her, at least, except when sorrow had put out their light."

"Did you see much of mamma? Were you at grandmamma's when she was there?" Hope asked almost timidly, there was something so commanding respect, in the old woman's quiet, chastened grief.

"No, my dear. I had left your grandmother's long before that. I only lived with her some years while my husband was away serving his king and country," drawing herself up with a look of pride. "When he came back without an arm, poor fellow, I went to his home. But I saw a great deal of your mother. We lived not far from your grandmother's in a cottage by the sea-shore. My Thomas liked to be by the sea, on which he had fought and bled for his country. And your mother often came to see me. Tender heart that she was, she took to me from the first, only because I had nursed and dearly loved the husband who was all to her. She was very fond of the sea-shore. She liked to watch the glimmer of the sun on the water. It smiled with her, she said, when she was happy, and comforted her when she was sad."

"And she was often sad?" Hope said mournfully.

"Ah yes, gentle dove! Unkindness, or even coldness from those she loved was what she could not bear. She had come among us, so earnest to love every one who in any way belonged to her husband, and when his own mother looked coldly on her, it nearly broke her heart.

"Many and many a day she would come down to my house, and sitting on the sand, leaning back upon my knees, as I sat knitting on the bench before the door, she'd look and look at the sunlight, as if she would look her very heart away. And then she would hide her face on my knee like a bairn, and say, 'Ah, nurse, how I love the sunshine, how I should like to be out there in the sunshine!' Poor darling, it did not need the mournful ring of her voice to tell me what she was thinking of. I knew well she was wishing for the sunshine of love and kindness in her home.

"And I used, in my poor way, to try and help her. I used to remind her of Him who had promised to be her sun; and I used to bid her look out for such glints of sunshine as He gave her. No life was quite without it, I used to tell her. And she used to look up with those eyes of hers, so blue, so loving, I never saw eyes like them, and used to say, 'Ah yes, Nurse, my husband's look is to me sunshine indeed, the sound of his voice, of his step, is my sweetest music.'"

Nurse Rebecca paused, and raised her apron to her eyes. She had most tenderly loved her nursling's wife, and her own words had brought back past days, with

the vividness of the present, to her heart. Hope, too, was shedding silent tears over the sorrows of the mother she had never known. Neither of them spoke for some minutes.

"You'll excuse me, Miss Hope, my dear," the old nurse at last said in a serious but kindly tone. "You'll excuse me, if I ask you if you remember to look out for the sunlight the Lord sends into your days? There is a look about you, my dear, that makes me ask the question."

"I have had sorrow deep enough to cloud out the sunshine," Hope said.

"True, my dear, but— You'll excuse me, my dear, I have carried your father in these arms, I have loved him as if he were my own. You'll excuse me, if I say, that the cloud I see in your face is scarcely that of sorrow. It is more like discontent, my dear, though that seems a hard thing to say. It is the Lord's will that we should take note of the clouds He sends, but it is not His will that we should make them blacker than He has made them, or that we should draw others of our own devising over the clear sky He has caused to shine upon us."

Hope did not answer immediately. She was less offended than might have been expected. But as we know, conscience had been once or twice telling her the same tale, and she had a pretty strong conviction of the truth of her old companion's remark.

After a struggle to keep down some indignation at her freedom of speech, she answered almost mildly, that she was obliged to her for her hints, and should certainly

endeavour to profit by them ; and then hastily turned again to the subject of her mother.

"I cannot understand how grandmamma could so dislike her," she said.

"Why, my dear, you see she had wished for another wife for her son ; and far be it from me to blame any one for wishing for such a daughter-in-law as Susan Maitland was. But it was bitter cruelty, to pay her own disappointment upon the head of one who had nothing to do with it.

"My dear," she added earnestly, after a few minutes' silence, "you owe all love and reverence to your present mother, for what she is in herself. But you owe them a hundredfold, for what she was to your own mother. The truest, tenderest friend that ever sorrowing heart had to lean upon. Oh, had it not been for the strength and peace she got from that strong, true heart, I don't think the gentle, timid dove could have lived through that one year. One meets with many kind hearts in the world, thank God, but it is not often that one meets with such a heart as hers is, upon which one can rest one's whole weight, and never be disappointed."

Hope smiled.

"That is exactly what I have heard said of Anne," she said.

"Well, my dear, and it is only what she deserves. Except in looks, and that, maybe, Miss Anne has less spirit than her mother, they are as like as can be. They have both the most unselfish, tender hearts, the most helpful natures that ever the Lord gave to any of His

creatures. And 'deed, I don't know why I say Miss Anne has less spirit. She is quieter and less merry than her mother was and is, but of the best kind of spirit there is truly no lack,—the spirit that is ever ready to do anything, everything, to help another."

It was a token of Hope's improvement that she listened to this warm encomium on Anne, not only without jealousy, but even with satisfaction. A still better token, that she did not even remember to commend herself for what at another time she might have dignified with the name of generous admiration of a rival's excellence. Her heart was just then too full of her mother to think of self, or of dear self's admirable qualities.

The dreaded interval before the arrival of the others passed only too quickly in listening to Rebecca's recollections of that mother. It would have been hard to say whether narrator or listener were most deeply interested. Rebecca was never tired of recalling those old times, and there was a vividness about her descriptions which made them very fascinating to Hope.

Dissimilar as their natures had been, the simple tender heart of the shrewd, strong-minded old woman had enabled her to understand the gentle lovingness of the timid sensitive girls she described, and her warm affection for her added a grace and beauty to her picture that nothing but affection could give.

Hope felt quite vexed when she heard the clear ringing tones of Julia's voice—always first heard, and saw the whole party coming up the little path to the garden gate.

A merry luncheon it was, and full justice was done to the good things Rebecca had provided for them. Her new-baked scones, fresh eggs, sweet butter, and rich cream, might have tempted the most fastidious appetite. While our friends, after their long walk through the bracing autumn air, brought appetites that might have relished much poorer fare.

They were a large, as well as a merry party. Being Saturday, the three schoolboys were of the number, and so was Mrs. Campbell. She had not intended to come, but Ernest had coaxed her, and, as she said, no one could resist his coaxing. The only duty that ought to have interfered was the daily visit to Duke's Court. But Ernest had persuaded his grandmother to relinquish what she considered her right, by promising to remain with her during afternoon service on the following day. And Ernest was such a favourite, she added, with a proud fond look at his handsome, animated face, that such a promise could make up for any deprivation.

Hope was disappointed of the expected pleasure of a walk home with Ernest. They lingered at Rebecca's so much longer than they had intended, that he found he should have no time to go to Walter's, except by making a short cut straight across the hills. Julia and the boys, whom no length of walk could tire out, went with him, and Hope and Mrs. Campbell, Anne and Fanny went more soberly and quietly home.

But although it was a disappointment not to have Ernest, Hope enjoyed her walk very much. It was the

road of which Mrs. Campbell had spoken as being a favourite of Hope's mother. Every turning had some association with her, and most naturally led the conversation to her.

As we know, Hope's heart had been softened, and made self-forgetful by what had passed between herself and Rebecca. She was in a fit state to observe and feel grateful for the indications of good and tender feelings, both towards herself and her mother, which Mrs. Campbell was constantly displaying ; and she felt more love for her, more reverential admiration of her character than she had ever before experienced. Before they reached home, her heart seemed full to overflowing of such right and well-deserved emotions ; she felt a desire to give them expression.

But, like all self-conscious people, Hope was shy in expressing her feelings. It was very seldom that she could yield to the natural impulse of the moment ; and even when she had turned to Mrs. Campbell to say something of all she felt, the remembrance that Anne was behind them, the dread of making herself ridiculous, chained her tongue, and checked the earnest words that had risen almost to her lips.

But it so happened that Mrs. Campbell followed Hope to her room to give her a letter which had come for her in her absence. In slowly ascending the stairs, Hope had been musing upon her mother's tender kindness to herself, even until her eyes were full of tears, as her heart was full of gratitude ; and when she took the letter from her hand, an irresistible impulse prompted



her to put her arm round her, and hiding her face on her shoulder, say in a low faltering voice—

“I am so glad you knew and loved mamma.”

“And don’t you think I am glad too, my love?” Mrs. Campbell answered, kissing her affectionately, and with answering tears in her own bright eyes. “Ah, Hope, to know and love any one as we loved each other, is a happiness for which to be grateful all our life long. It does one good that lasts as long as we live.”

No more was said, but the hearts of both were made happier by the little scene.


Before Mrs. Campbell took off her bonnet, she knelt down to thank God for having heard her prayers, and having sent a blessing with Ernest’s visit.

And as Hope slowly laid aside her things, she said to herself, “Yes, Rebecca was right, there is sunshine even in every day of our lives.”



## CHAPTER XV.

### THE FRUITS OF ERNEST'S VISIT.

 HE fruits of Ernest's visit ! Is it then over so soon ? Yes, my dear readers ; if a very happy, it was a very short one. But then it had been so happy.

Because he was to be so short a time with them, he had not thought it necessary to give up any time to study. He had devoted himself entirely to his mother and sisters. There was scarcely an hour of the day that he was not with them, or at least with some of them.

This might perhaps make them miss him the more now he was gone ; but still it had been a good thing for Hope, as it had enabled the brother and sister to become far better acquainted with each other, than in other circumstances they could have done in so short a time.

But they did all miss him sorely at first ; and at first it almost seemed as if to Hope there were to be no fruits, or at least only evil ones from his visit. At first her gloom, listlessness, and dejection seemed worse than before. She seemed to be irritated and provoked,

that the others could return to their old occupations, and was reluctant even to accept of the comfort that was offered in the reflection, that this was Ernest's last session, that next visit he should return among them for good, to be his father's assistant and partner.

From this state Hope was roused by Ernest's first letter, the kindest, most cheering letter that ever anybody received. It brought back all the first happiness she had felt, in knowing herself so tenderly loved by this dear brother, and reminded her at the same time, that of this happiness no absence could deprive her.

About the same time, in reading over some of Lucy Markham's late letters, she was reminded of resolutions she had been forming for the last two or three weeks, but which she had almost forgotten in the indulgence of grief at Ernest's going away—resolutions to be kind and helpful to others, to imitate Anne's universal usefulness, that she might share in Anne's reward of universal praise and love.

Perhaps in no other respect had Ernest's visit wrought so great a change on Hope, as in her feelings towards Anne. Even before he came, she had learned to trust to her kindness, but she had been unconscious how much she did so. She knew that she no longer disliked Anne as she had once done, but she was hardly aware how constantly she looked to her for help or comfort in any little difficulty or distress; how sure she felt that Anne would spare no trouble to render her any service she might require from her. Ernest had gradually led her to know and to understand her

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better. His esteem and regard for Anne had almost insensibly given rise to similar feelings in Hope ; and Anne's own conduct had greatly helped to strengthen such feelings.

With all her jealous desire to engross Ernest's company and attention to herself, Hope could not long remain blind to Anne's constant but quiet watchfulness over her own and Ernest's comfort. Hope had scarcely time to form a wish about sitting next him, about walking with him, about being the one chosen to render him any service, before Anne had quietly contrived to have that wish gratified ; and Hope herself could hardly have felt more anxiety to display the fair side of her character to Ernest's eye than Anne showed.

Quiet and unobtrusive as these kindly offices had been, even the self-engrossed Hope had perceived and been touched by them ; and the latent envy and jealousy she had once felt towards Anne, were completely subdued. She no longer envied Anne the praise and love poured forth upon her—she no longer desired to deprive her of them, but she did long to share them with her ; and, to insure her doing so, she had often lately drawn brilliant visions of the earnest kindness, the unselfish, helpful spirit by which she was to win every heart.

As I said before, these visions had for a day or two faded before the depression of spirits following Ernest's departure, until the re-perusal of Lucy's letters revived them.

Lucy had the most thorough belief in Hope. She believed her own estimate of her character to be perfectly correct, as she believed her complaints of the loneliness and isolation of her position in her father's house to be perfectly reasonable. She accepted all her melancholy descriptions as strictly true. In these letters she expressed the tenderest sympathy for Hope's sorrows, the most affectionate compassion for all the painfulness of her position ; but, at the same time, the brightest hopes that this position must soon be bettered, and these sorrows soon relieved. She wrote, and she truly believed, that Hope could not be long in any situation without winning all hearts to herself ; and she drew a most fascinating picture of what she believed her dear friend must be to all around her. Hope's own portraits of herself could not be fairer than this one drawn by the hand of the simple, loving, trusting Lucy.

Burning blushes rose to Hope's cheeks as she read it. Her faintly-dawning self-knowledge was not yet clear enough to make her feel that she had never deserved such a character ; but that she did not deserve it now, was only too plain ; that, however, she should deserve it henceforth, was, she believed, entirely in her own power ; and self-esteem rose lightly again into his old throne, as she resolved to perform the most startling deeds of unselfishness and kindness.

Almost unconsciously she desired that her first effort should be a great one—one worthy of herself, worthy of her genius ; and to help and comfort Ernest's old friend, Walter Howison, was the effort she fixed upon.

Poor Walter ! Ernest seemed to have made little progress with him. His mind seemed almost as much darkened with doubt and fear as ever ; but it was only almost, it was not quite so dark. If despair still reigned, it was more humble, less sullen than it had been. If he would not acknowledge that any ray of comfort had reached him, at least he seemed no longer to doubt the possibility of his some time or other obtaining it. He listened eagerly to Ernest's reading of the Bible, and seemed often to catch at a word here and there, and for a short time, at least, to take its good to himself.

Ernest, in his last visit, had asked him to allow Anne and Hope to visit him, and to this request he had yielded an unwilling assent.

Anne had gone the first day after Ernest left them, but Hope had felt too listless and depressed to accompany her. Now, in the renewed vigour of her good resolutions, she was impatient to go, and inclined to be irritated when some difficulties seemed to present themselves in the way of Anne's accompanying her on the very day she had chosen to fix upon. These difficulties were, as usual, smoothed away by the exertions of the ever-kind mother, who seemed always to delight to seek Hope's comfort and pleasure before her own, and to grudge no sacrifice that could promote them ; and the two girls set out together.

During their long and almost silent walk, Hope's mind was fully occupied with picturing the scene in which she was to enact such a prominent part. Before they

reached the house, she had composed at least twenty eloquent appeals against Walter's remaining doubts, and each appeal had been crowned with the success it so fully deserved.

But things did not turn out exactly as she had planned. Walter received them very civilly, but very coldly. He was silent and reserved, and seemed not to have the least intention of making them sharers in the confidence he had given to Ernest.

Then arose Hope's habitual anxiety to excel, to do and say exactly the thing most calculated to create a favourable impression of her varied excellencies, and it completely robbed her of all her fancied ease and self-possession. She found herself unable to say a single word.

But Anne, Anne was always at her ease. And quiet as was her nature, she was always able to say what she chose. Why did she not endeavour to get through Walter's reserve, and to make him express some of the feelings with which they both knew he was oppressed? Hope expected that she would, and was provoked that she did not.

She did not ask one of those straightforward searching questions which Hope had fancied she might, and ought to have asked. She did not make one effort to force herself into his secret thoughts. She contented herself with asking him about his bodily pains, and with expressing the most soothing, because the most sincere sympathy with him in his sufferings. One never felt that Anne was compassionate. One always

felt that she was really pained in the pain of those whom she tried to comfort.

The stern, self-depending old man felt soothed by such genuine sympathy ; and when Anne, at the conclusion of her short visit, offered to read to him out of the Bible, he accepted her offer with cordiality. He made no remark upon the passage she had chosen, but in the increased warmth of his grasp, as she shook hands with him, Anne read an assurance that her visit had not been unprofitable.

As soon as they left the house, Hope expressed her disappointment. Anne did not share in it.

She had never expected, she said, to find Walter frank and open with them. He never was so to any one except to Ernest. And it was unreasonable to expect that he should be, to such young inexperienced girls as they were.

"Then I don't see what good our going to see him can do," Hope said.

"Oh," Anne answered cheerfully, "I am sure he enjoyed hearing that chapter very much. He is so weak now, that he cannot read to himself. And, you know, Hope, the Lord's own words must be more powerful than any we can use."

Hope was silenced for a few minutes, but not satisfied. Such a humble kind of instrumentality did not suit her wishes. She desired, although of course she did not confess it, even to herself, that the good she did should be more palpable than Anne seemed to contemplate. After a few minutes she began the subject again, by re-



marking, that she thought they ought at least to have tried to overcome Walter's reserve, and to make him speak freely.

"I don't see how we could," Anne said quietly. "If I should think it impertinent and intrusive to force my way into a man's house without his free permission, I should think it still more impertinent and intrusive to force my way into his thoughts or feelings ;—or at least to try to do so. For after all, you know, it is beyond our power. And our very attempt would only defeat our own wishes, by making him still more reserved."

"Still, without such attempt, I don't see how we can do him good," Hope persisted.

"Then, I am afraid, we must be content without doing him good. But I think you are too easily discouraged, Hope. Don't you think, as I said before, that the Lord's own words are the most powerful?"

"But how can we know what part of them to use?" she asked quickly.

"Only by asking the Lord himself to direct us in our choice," Anne said reverentially. "And, perhaps, when Walter knows us a little better, he may tell us what parts he should like us to read. He knows the whole Bible better than we do, I suspect."

"And its meaning too, I suppose," Hope answered. "I really don't see that he needs us."

She was beginning to think the trouble rather too great, for all the reward that she could expect to reap from it. It did not seem that Walter would ever feel any of that warm gratitude she desired to excite.

Anne did not immediately answer, and Hope pressed the question. She wished for a confirmation of her half-formed resolution not to go again, or at least to go but seldom.

"He is such a clear-seeing and judging old man," she said, "it does not seem to me that we could ever help him, however frank he might be. Don't you think, Anne, that he must understand all the truths of the Bible better than we can do?"

Anne was still silent for a minute or two. It was difficult for her to speak on the subject. But as Hope waited for an answer, she said humbly, but decidedly—

"That Walter's head knowledge may far surpass ours, is, I think, very probable. But, Hope, we know that the weakest, most ignorant child who is taught by the Lord's own Spirit, may in such things go far beyond the wisest man that ever lived. And I should deny God's grace to me if I did not say that I know He has brought to me, out of many a part of His Word, such a living light and power as no mere force, or clearness of intellect could have obtained."

Hope was now effectually silenced. Silenced by the painful suspicion that any light she had ever seen in the Bible was merely such as her own understanding had wrought out for her, and by the anxious question, how far the want of such a light as Anne described was a sign of some radical defect in her religion.

This was a question not easily solved, and one she was not very willing to entertain. The awakening of it was always associated in her mind with this her first visit to

Walter, and, perhaps, made her the more unwilling to repeat it. She did go once or twice again. But the progress made in helping and cheering him was too small to satisfy her.

And when, in the course of a week or two, God himself took to Him his great power, and made light to shine out of darkness, it was so manifestly the Lord's own work, so little ground was left for His humble agents to glory in what they had done, that Hope felt less inclination than before for that long walk, and generally allowed Anne to go alone.

About this time, however, a new way of doing good presented itself to her.

She had received an invitation to spend a week with the Fosters. She had wished to decline it. She did not like Eliza, she said. And although she admired Mrs. Foster very much, and even liked her after a fashion, still she was no companion for her, and a week's endurance of her childishness might be very tiresome.

Mrs. Campbell wished her to accept the invitation, because she thought change of scene always did her good. And to induce her to do so, she urged that Hope might be able to benefit Eliza.

In Hope's present state of mind such a plea was all-powerful. She at once gave up her own objections, and prepared for the visit with the most dazzling expectations of the good to result from it. Good greater than ever has been, or ever can be, effected in the short space of one week.

These expectations increased in magnitude and dis-

tinctness as the time for their realization drew near. And at the moment when she drove up to the Fosters' door, she was enacting the principal part in the most interesting, affecting scene imaginable. She was listening to Mr. and Mrs. Foster's earnest expression of thankfulness, as with tears of joy in their eyes, they endeavoured to describe the extraordinary happiness she had brought to their hearts and home, by the marvellous change she had wrought in Eliza's whole character and conduct. And Eliza, Eliza who, one short week before, had been the most frigid, unimpressible, the most self-seeking, and self-complacent of human beings,—that same Eliza was, with alternate fears and smiles, now pouring forth the frankest, fullest confession of her past errors, and now the most exalted resolutions of future self-sacrifice and self-devotion.

Pity such an interesting scene should have been disturbed. But before she had quite decided which speech was most worthy of her exalted merit, out of the dozen she had invented for Mr. Foster's benefit, the footman had appeared at the door, let down the steps of the carriage, and she was forced to descend.

Not to descend from her dreams, however ; they continued to engross her through the whole day. So to engross her as to make her a very silent, inattentive, and disagreeable companion to her kind hostess. So to engross her as to make her even rude, in her eagerness to secure that private interview with Eliza, which in all former visits she had sedulously shunned. So engrossed her, that when they were at last left alone, she did not

attend to one word of the long list of grievances Eliza poured forth ; but occupied herself altogether in composing her own eloquent harangue, and had scarcely allowed Eliza to finish her complaints before she began the gravest, most sententious lecture, that, perhaps, ever young lips uttered to young ears.

Eliza tried to defend herself from the charges brought against her. But Hope overthrew each defence with wonderful skill, with, perhaps, still more wonderful decision. No weak compassion could tempt her to compromise the stern truths she uttered. Nor, alas ! to give those truths that living power which nothing but compassion and gentleness could have given.

Ah, Hope, such lecturing could do little good ; and so you found too soon. Eliza soon became quite silent, but it was not the silence of humble contrition, but of sullen indignation. As soon as she could, she escaped from the presence of her stern teacher, and took good care never again to expose herself to a similar mortification. Hope was forced to perceive that she had not done the least good ; nay, that she had increased the sullen gloom under which poor Eliza constantly suffered.

And when, on the last day of her visit, Anne came to spend the day, Hope had the additional mortification of seeing Eliza's prepossession for herself transferred to Anne,—of seeing these two engaged in confidential conversation during the whole walk they took together, and of seeing the fruit of such conversation in the comparatively softened expression of Eliza's face, when the family met at dinner, and in the comparative pleasantness of

her manners. It was well that Hope had, ere this, learned really to love Anne, otherwise such a success, gained where she had failed, might have made her feel very bitter envy.

Hope had also been labouring hard to make herself agreeable to their neighbours in the village. And very affable and condescending she had been to the Misses Morrison, and others of their stamp. But as such people are not always aware of their inferiority of mind and education, and are generally very much alive to their own superiority in respect of age, such condescension was by them all felt to be rather overpowering. They rather avoided Hope when they met in society, or were awkward and uncomfortable in conversing with her. And Anne—Anne, who never thought of being condescending—Anne was still far the most popular.

Well, baffled in these attempts, the home circle still remained. Mrs. Maitland's little primrose fable had made a deep impression upon Hope's mind. She had, she confessed to herself, withdrawn too much from the family life,—held too much aloof from participation in the labours, cares, interests and amusements, joys and sorrows of the others. Now, she should place herself in the midst of them, and be to them the sweetest, loveliest flower that ever grew. In her secret soul she expected to hold a higher rank than the simple primrose. A more distinguished, more universally favourite flower must be her type.

Poor Hope, she had accepted only a part, and a small part, of the old lady's fable. She had quite forgotten the

simple, unselfish desire for the happiness of others, which had quickened Mrs. Maitland's efforts. And she never once thought of that earnest study of character, which had insured their success. Hope had no time to study the characters or feelings of others, no thought to bestow upon such a subject. Her own success, and the love and admiration it must win for her, were sufficient food for her mind.

So she began with painful diligence to be cheerer and helper-general to the household.

Did Dr. Campbell come home any day more grave and silent than usual, and, respecting his feelings, did Mrs. Campbell, and Anne, and even the talking Julia, become more grave also ; then this seemed a fitting time for Hope to come forth in all the splendour of her new character, and to cheer and amuse all by a forced gaiety, and an incessant flow of talk. And very much provoked, and very impatient did she feel, when, the more she talked, the more grave and sad grew her father's face, and the more anxious and inquiring were the looks cast upon him by his sympathizing wife.

And then, when Hope had given up in despair, and felt constrained to perceive that her efforts were fruitless, then Anne's unobtrusive kindness and attention came into play, and without the least apparent effort, she had won him either to lessen his sadness by communicating it, or to feel its weight less severely in listening to Julia's sweet song, or in reading the new book which Anne, or Mrs. Campbell, seemed always to have at hand for such an emergency.

Hope thought it hard that Anne should succeed without any trouble, while her strenuous exertions had failed. She had a grudging kind of feeling, that Anne had not deserved success.

But Hope had not observed, that when Anne whispered to Julia to go to the piano, she had undertaken to finish Julia's work for her, although she had a letter she was most anxious to write that evening. And Hope did not recollect that the book she was so earnestly recommending Dr. Campbell to read, was the one she had chosen out for her own amusement.

At another time perhaps two of the boys were engaged in a hot and threatening dispute. And Hope, ambitious of the fame of the peace-maker, took upon herself the office of arbitrator between them. Her judgments were generally righteous enough, but given so peremptorily, and with so little regard to the feelings of either party, that the breach was rather widened than closed by her interference. The conqueror was encouraged in an unkind and provoking spirit of triumph. And the conquered was irritated, and because irritated, less disposed than ever to acknowledge, or to know himself in the wrong.

Then, when each carried their story to Anne, she, by merely listening to all they had to say, soon succeeded in reconciling them to each other, and sending them out to play as great friends as ever.

Again Hope felt herself unjustly treated. She forgot that Anne's patient listening had involved the loss of a quarter of an hour of her ever precious time. And



that, in order to complete the cure, she had laid aside her own occupation to help them in theirs, in the covering of their balls, or setting to right their gardens.

Even in these ball-covering, or garden-arranging matters, Anne constantly surpassed Hope. Hope was so impatient of all direction—condemned so scornfully their plans—persisted so obstinately in her own. While Anne was most good-naturedly ready to do exactly as they wished, most scrupulous to obey their minute orders, even where she was convinced she could have done much better if left to her own judgment.

Then, again, Hope saw Fanny sitting in a corner crying, as if her little heart would break, and obstinately refusing to reveal the cause of her sorrow, or to accept of any consolation. Hope's patience was not great. In consoling another she was very desirous that the greatness of her powers of consolation should be clearly manifested, and was proportionally provoked that they did not meet with the success they merited. She soon left Fanny with a bitter remark upon her folly and obstinacy, which increased the flow of tears.

But Fanny soon rose from her retired corner, and stole to Anne's side ; and in half an hour Hope saw her nursing her doll, and smiling as if tears had never been on her cheeks,—as if grief had been for long a stranger in her heart.

And what had Anne done for her ? Hope said, nothing. But Hope was wrong. She did not see that Anne had given up her comfortable posture, and cramped herself up in her chair to make room for the

sorrowful little girl to sit beside her. She did not see how, absorbed as she was in her book, she was still ready to attend to her companion. The book had to be returned to the book-club that evening, and in her natural anxiety to get it finished, she might have been excused in giving her whole mind to it. But she did not. She was constantly watching for the exact moment to say some soothing words—the exact moment to bring forward some new and more pleasant ideas to the sorrowful little mind, and most ready to suggest an amusing occupation, although it might be one that involved such an amount of help on her part as destroyed all hope of finishing her book in time.

All these particulars Hope failed to perceive. She only saw that Anne always succeeded, and that she always failed; and she did not think of inquiring into the secret of this magic influence which Anne seemed to exert over all.

The secret was easily enough solved by an impartial observer, if not by Hope. The very unobtrusiveness of Anne's kindness insured her success. And how could Hope's be unobtrusive, when its very object was to win praise and esteem?

Then Anne was so eminently a reasonable being. She had no expectation of finding everybody exactly like herself—no desire that every one should think and feel just as she did. And above all, she had such an art of putting herself in the place of those she desired to serve; not merely into their circumstances, but even into the feelings those circumstances were cal-

culated to awaken, in their peculiar habits of mind and heart.

She had little in common with Eliza Foster. But she had studied Eliza's character, and had taught herself to understand the prejudiced feelings with which she regarded her relatives, and the real unhappiness such prejudices gave rise to. And she could feel tender pity for that unhappiness, even while condemning the wrong feelings which were its cause.

With her fine intellect, and well-stored mind, the petty cares of the Misses Morrison could have little interest to her. But she admired and respected them for the qualities of heart she knew they possessed, and was ready to attend to their long stories about trifles, and to exert herself to conceive how such trifles appeared to minds like theirs.

Her own contented healthful spirit was the very opposite of poor old Mrs. Campbell's fretful one. But she never forgot the misery that fretfulness brought to its indulger, and the difficulty of her subduing it, so long confirmed as it had been. Hope talked very sensibly about the duty of remembering this, and of being influenced by the remembrance to bear patiently with all her complaints. Anne did not talk about the thing, but she did it, while Hope's wisdom stopped at the talking.

Hope did not see all these peculiarities in Anne's character. But she felt their influence upon herself. When sad and dispirited, a walk with Anne restored and revived her, even though almost a silent one.

Anne's very silence seemed speaking of tender sympathy. She was becoming each day more attached to, more interested in Anne. And was learning each day more fully to understand how it was that she commanded the warm love, and, at the same time, the real respect of every one with whom she associated.

It was very much owing to Anne that Hope did not, at this time, fall back into the same gloomy state from which she had been aroused by Ernest's visit. She could not continue unsuccessful attempts to be of use. Success, complete and palpable, was the only thing which could have overcome her selfish love of ease, and of her own way. So that she speedily gave up all her new attempts at usefulness, and sadly resigned herself to her old insignificance.

But although as little useful as before, she was no longer so gloomy, she was no longer such a subject of anxiety to her kind friends. Ernest's affection was now a never-failing source of happy thoughts ; and her new interest in Anne, a constant relief from her gloomy and desponding meditations.

She was still more silent and less awake to enjoyment than was natural to her age. But she was not so cold and indifferent to the kindness and attention lavished upon her as she had been. She was now encouraging her heart to open itself to the warm, true affection of her new mother, instead of wilfully denying its existence, as she had once done, and persuading herself that she was a stranger and an intruder into that mother's house.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### HOPE BEGINS TO KNOW HERSELF.



CHRISTMAS came, and with it Ernest. As this was his last year at college, and he was very busy, he had arranged not to come home during the short Christmas vacation. But Mrs. Campbell, rejoicing in the good his former visit had done to Hope, and anxious to give her the benefit of another as soon as possible, had written to ask him to change his plans.

And so he came, and much joy he brought with him to the whole family. The weather was very fine ; frosty and clear, just the weather it ought to be at Christmas. And they were able to get as much enjoyment out of each day as their hearts could wish.

Ernest resumed his daily walks to old Walter's. But it was a very different Walter that he now visited. He was as silent and reserved as ever. Even Anne and Hope might never have known of the happy change in his feelings, if his desire to send a message to Ernest had not for once overcome his reserve. And even to Ernest himself he said as little as possible. He listened to his reading of the Bible with a hungering and thirst-

ing eagerness, and was now always ready to name the passages he wished to hear. He did not care to speak much. But there was a quiet resting peace in his countenance that spoke more than words.

Once only he broke through this silence, to tell Ernest how the change had been begun, how the light had first dawned on his soul.

"It was not your doing, Master Ernest," he said, "though I always fancied that if ever peace did come, it would be you that brought it. But, you see, the Lord saw the pride with which I trusted to man's mind to bring out truth to man's soul. And so He would let no human hand do that for me. But Himself took His own words, and spoke them into my very heart, and the light and the peace grew, and grew, and spread, and spread, and the Lord that had planted the seed, Himself watched, and tended, and watered it ; and to His name be all the praise."

On another occasion, he told Ernest that all he could say for himself in the Lord's sight, was this plea which Ernest had once put into his mouth, that he was wholly and for ever lost without Christ, that if He did not help him, none else could.

"And, Master Ernest," he added solemnly, "that plea is strong enough ; I am willing to put my all upon that."


As before, Anne and Hope accompanied Ernest in these walks. And, as before, Hope was often startled at her want of sympathy in the feelings expressed by the other two, in their conversations on religion.

In nothing did she feel this more painfully than in reference to their joyful acquiescence in Walter's decision, that their instrumentality had been very small in bringing light and peace to his mind. Ernest's fine expressive countenance was lighted up with most heartfelt joy as he spoke of the rich, free grace, the wondrous power the Lord had manifested in this case. And Hope's heart sunk within her as conscience whispered, that such would not have been, nay, that such had not been her feelings. In her visits to Walter, the Lord's glory had been the last object of her hopes and wishes. And when she had found that little glory was to accrue to herself from all her labours, no earnest desire for Walter's salvation, or for the advancement of the Lord's kingdom, had helped to keep alive her interest in the case, or to induce her to persevere.

Such recollections became so painfully distinct to Hope's heart, that she began to look forward even with pain to those quiet walks which had at one time been her greatest pleasure.

But courage, dear Hope. Such sorrow is good ; and in after years you may often have cause to look back with gratitude upon the pain you now suffer.

Ernest's short visit was soon over, and the family went back into their customary mode of life. But this time Hope's grief for Ernest's departure was far less silent and sullen than before. She now sought relief from it in speaking of him to her mother and Anne, and while comforted by their participation in her feelings, she was, at the same time, drawn closer to them,



and made more willing to rest upon their affection for herself.

Her life was now much less solitary. She still adhered to her somewhat formal regularity in hours of study. But she now often carried her books into the pleasant, sunny school-room, at hours when she knew the little girls were out of doors, and she and Anne spent many pleasant hours together.

In spite of the contempt with which she had received the bare idea, that Anne could help her, she soon found that it was by no means an incorrect one. Anne's love of study was far more genuine than Hope's, and in many branches her progress had been greater. And in the unconscious influence she exercised over Hope, imbuing her with her own thirst for knowledge, and, without any attempt to teach, enlarging her views of the real value of the different kinds of knowledge they were pursuing ; in all this, the good she wrought in Hope's mind and heart, was far greater than she had the least conception of.

Thus passed the winter months quietly, and not unhappily, even to Hope. The spring was an unhealthy one. The weather was unnaturally close and warm through the greater part of February and March. And this warmth was succeeded by a long continuance of cold east winds, the more severely felt from the contrast.

Hope was not of a robust constitution, and, unaccustomed to our northern climate, suffered a good deal from this changeable weather, so that her father and mother eagerly embraced Mrs. Maitland's proposal, that she and Anne should spend a week or two with her at Bracehead.



Hope liked the prospect of this visit much, liked the visit itself still more. She could hardly have helped liking it,—the pleasant old-fashioned place, in all its first spring beauty, a beauty peculiarly becoming to it. The kind, gentle, single-hearted hostess, always such a pleasant object to look upon, always such an interesting character to study ; and a companion of her own age, so rich in intellect and heart as she had learned to know Anne to be,—surely such ingredients were sufficient for any one's happiness.

And besides enjoyment, Hope got good from this visit—good perhaps all the greater, all the more permanent, certainly all the more palatable, that it was so silently and gradually wrought.

Neither Anne nor Mrs. Maitland were blind to Hope's defects, but it was not at all in their nature to set formally to work to lecture her into a conviction of them, and into conquering them. They might wish, and perhaps try, to tempt her into a better way. They never thought of driving her.

But while no word of reproof ever fell upon her ear, their example was a daily, an hourly reproof to her heart. While no one ever directly taught her that self-forgetfulness was a duty, from their daily life she was beginning to know it was a happiness. While Anne never upbraided her for her want of observation of, or indifference to, outward things, her own genuine, loving enjoyment of all that was good and beautiful in nature, books, character, and action, insensibly imparted itself to Hope, thrown so constantly together as they were at Braehead.

Among the happy weeks passed there, one stood out pre-eminently for enjoyment ; one which Millicent Carnegie spent with them. Her liveliness, her gaiety, her true, girlish animation, gave new spirit to the quietly happy life they had been leading. Hope had perhaps never been happier, I am sure she had never been so really merry as during this week's visit. She had been a very quiet child, a very quiet young girl. This was the first time that she had known what childish gaiety and unreasoning enjoyment really were.

During Millicent's visit, Hope had again occasion to remark Anne's perfect freedom from all selfish jealousy. Hope had long been convinced that Anne was Millicent's favourite ; so long, that the first bitterness of discovering the truth was past. She was quite reconciled to it, quite satisfied with the share of affection accorded to herself ; but what struck her was Anne's total unconsciousness of the fact. It never occurred to Anne to measure the love others bore her, or that she bore to them. She was too much occupied with the happiness of loving to think of such calculations. At the same time, she was not unobservant or forgetful of Hope's peculiar feelings, and was always most anxious to insure that she should have as much enjoyment of Millicent's society as herself. Hope saw this, and again Anne's silent example brought shame to her heart, and with shame the desire to imitate her.

The girls' stay at Braehead was prolonged a good deal beyond what was at first intended. An infectious fever had broken out in Seaborough. One of the Campbells'

servants took it, and Dr. Campbell would not hear of Anne and Hope's returning to the infected house. It turned out a mild case. The woman was soon well enough to be removed to her aunt's house near Seaborough, and, after the necessary fumigation, Hope and Anne returned home.

The very evening after their return, Dr. Campbell began to complain of illness. The next day he was confined to bed, and in the course of two or three, dangerously ill.

It was now a changed house. Sadness and anxiety reigned instead of the usual cheerful bustle and innocent merriment. Mrs. Maitland had taken the boys and younger girls to Braehead, but the elder ones remained to share their mother's anxieties and labours.

These labours were neither few nor small. Two others of the servants were seized ; and as the one first ill was still too weak to return to her duties, the whole household labour devolved on the remaining one. Neither in attendance nor nursing could help be procured. The fever was so prevalent, that all professional nurses were already engaged, and the dread, the terror of infection, held back many a one who, in other circumstances, would gladly have hastened to the assistance of a family so beloved as the Campbells were.

Dr. Campbell's kind and skilful assistant, Mr. Baillie, gave as much of his time to the Campbells as was possible ; but, of course, in such general sickness, that time was not great, and the whole burden of watching and nursing the three patients, rested upon Mrs. Campbell and her girls.

She and Mr. Baillie had wished to write for Ernest as soon as his father's illness assumed a serious character ; but Dr. Campbell retained the possession of his senses, so far at least, although his mind was excited and weakened, and was so earnest that his son should be kept out of all risk of infection, that it had been thought better to yield ; and Ernest was not summoned until the danger was so imminent, that they could no longer delay.

Perhaps no woman ever discharged such painful and arduous duties with more quiet self-possession, with more kind consideration for each other, with less selfish thought for themselves, than did our friends at the Manor-house.

And yet to this unselfish wisdom there was one exception. Poor Hope ! must your selfish nature break out even at such a time as this ? But we must have patience with her—she is now suffering from a remorse which renders her dead to every other feeling—she is torturing herself by recalling all the particulars of her intercourse with her father since the first moment they met. All his thoughtful kindness, all his affectionate anxiety towards her have risen up to accuse her before the bar of conscience, and are loudly demanding what return she has ever made for them all.


And these accusations, these demands Hope does not now try to silence. The pain they give her seems to her morbid fancy a kind of expiation for her cold and guilty indifference to her father's goodness and love ; and this expiation she labours to make more severe with all the ingenuity of self-torment.

She takes a pleasure, finds a satisfaction in making herself as miserable as possible, in wearing out both body and mind, by every useless trial she can invent—insisting upon sitting up night after night, when her doing so is of no use—banishing sleep even when she lies down, by working herself into a perfect fever of anxiety and sorrow—stealing to the door of the room to listen a dozen times in the night, when the careful mother thinks she is safely in bed, and refusing to take the nourishment that is requisite to sustain her strength—all these seem to her only a fit and righteous mode of punishing herself for past offences against the now dearly-loved father, of testifying that newly-awakened affection she might perhaps never be able to express to himself.

His illness threatened to have a speedy termination. He had been so much over-worked for some weeks before the fever seized him, that he seemed to have no strength to throw it off. A day soon came when his family could only too easily read the word “hopeless” in the faces of Mr. Baillie and the physician from the neighbouring town, who was attending along with him.

But soon after they were gone, a change took place. When Mr. Baillie came to pay his last visit that night, he found that the stupor, in which the patient had been all day sunk, had changed into a more natural sleep, and in his pulse and whole appearance there were slightly favourable symptoms. He could not altogether bid them hope, neither could he bid them despair.

Hope was to be watcher this night. Mrs. Campbell



was completely worn out, and had consented to lie down for a few hours, urged thereto by Mr. Baillie's representations, that if their hopes were realized, her presence must be more essential to her husband's comfort when he was able to recognise her, than now while he was insensible.

Poor Julia's nursing labours were over. She had been unwell all day, had been obliged to go to bed early in the afternoon, and now, when Mr. Baillie visited her, he saw too much reason to fear that the fever had fairly set in.

One of the sick servants was doing well, and required little attendance; but the other was very ill, and at times so wild with delirium, as to require both Anne and Janet to manage her.

In these circumstances, it seemed absolutely necessary that Dr. Campbell should be left to Hope's care; but it was a necessity to which Mrs. Campbell yielded with extreme reluctance. Hope was looking so pale and wearied, that she was most unwilling to suffer her to take any fatigue.

The responsibility and anxiety were not so great, as Mrs. Campbell only meant to lie down, with her clothes on, in a bed in the dressing-room; and the door of communication being left open, Hope could summon her in a moment, if necessary.

Before leaving her, Mrs. Campbell arranged everything for her comfort and convenience, placed the easy arm-chair in the best position, saw that everything that could be required was on the little table by her side,

and that what was most likely to be first wanted, should be nearest at hand.

After she had given her the last kiss, and had whispered the heart-felt "God bless and support you," she returned to advise her to read, to beguile the tedium and anxiety of her watch.

"It will make the hours pass more quickly," she said; "and remember, my love, that the more calm and collected we can keep our minds, the better able we shall be to do our duty to him," with a tearful kind of emphasis on the pronoun.

It was a judicious advice, but Hope was not inclined to follow it. We know her heroine feelings of old. During the healthful, happy kind of life she had been leading at Braehead, she had almost forgotten them; but within the last ten days they had been exerting their former influence. And now she had a tempting heroine situation, watching through the dead of night by the bedside of her perhaps dying father.

It might seem strange that such feelings should find fresh food in regrets and remorse for the very errors into which they themselves had betrayed her; but so it was. And it was a part of Hope's self-imposed penance to work herself up to despair of her father's recovery, and to torture herself by imagining the terrible moment, when she should fully know that all was over, that for ever gone was all hope of making him amends for past coldness.

Even if she had been wise enough to try, I doubt if Hope could have checked the harassing fears and

fancies which were now pursuing each other through her mind, and unnerving and unfitting her for every duty.

She had made herself quite ill and feverish by the wild tumult of feelings in which she had been indulging, nay, which she had been exciting for the last ten days. She had wilfully worn out both body and mind. It would be difficult to tell how many needless journeys up and down stairs she had made in that time, feeling as if each were a deed worthy of note and praise, and regarding the wearied aching of her limbs with as much self-complacency as if they had been employed on the most indispensable and important services.

And now when really important service was required of her, she had made herself quite unfit to render it. Her imagination had run fairly wild, depriving her of all power of reasoning, all self-possession, all self-control.

She sat there fancying the wildest and most terrible occurrences,—listening, as it were, to the dead silence, until she could bear it no longer, and then moving restlessly in her seat to dispel it, and starting in a kind of terror at the noise herself had made. She looked at her father. His face was fully turned towards her, and, wan and wasted as it was, looked still more ghastly in the unnatural light of the shaded night-lamp; and seen through the medium of her excited imagination, she fancied all was over, and watched for some movement of the bed-clothes that might indicate life, until her eyes grew dim with fear, and listened for his breathing, until the sickening beating of her own heart would have drowned sounds far louder than it happily now was.



Sick and wild with terror, she had risen from her chair to seek her mother, when a faint rustling close beside her struck upon her ear ; and, looking round, she saw, as she fancied, the spectre of her father at her side. She gave a loud scream, and fell fainting into Ernest's arms.

He had left Edinburgh before the summons of that day had reached him. Hope, in her tumultuous visionary fears, had not heard his studiously quiet entrance. And his likeness to his father was great enough to deceive her eyes, blinded as they were by excitement and fear.

Her loud scream had awakened Mrs. Campbell. She was in the room in an instant. And it was well she was so quick. Dr. Campbell had also been aroused, and, confused and excited, was endeavouring to get out of bed ; and Ernest, hampered by Hope, could not get forward to his side.

It was well, too, that Mrs. Campbell's habit of self-control had been so carefully cherished. At once she regained her self-possession, commanded her trembling voice, and in pleasant, cheerful tones, soothed the patient, and persuaded him to lie down again, while Ernest carried Hope to her own room.

When she came to herself, she was lying on her bed, and Anne was bending anxiously over her, bathing her forehead with cold water.

When Hope opened her eyes, Anne gave her a tearful, tremulous kiss upon the forehead. Hope put both arms round her neck, drew her closer to her, and gave way to a long and passionate burst of remorseful tears. For even in that first moment of returning consciousness

there had flashed upon her all the folly and sinfulness of her late behaviour, and the painful contrast it presented to the quiet, unselfish wisdom and forethought exercised by the others around her.

Of the extent of the mischief her selfish folly had wrought, Hope was not aware, until its worst effects had passed away.

So suddenly and startlingly aroused from sleep, Dr. Campbell's fever had returned in renewed violence, and in this relapse his danger seemed even more imminent than at first. For some days his medical attendants had very little hope of his ultimate recovery. But during those days Hope was quite confined to bed. She had brought upon herself a kind of low nervous fever, which weakened her so much, that she was unable to rise. And before she had recovered sufficiently to go to his room, this second crisis was happily past, and he was recovering slowly but surely.

These days of confinement to bed were very solitary ones. With every wish to be much with her, to cheer and amuse her, it was impossible for her friends to give her more attendance than was absolutely indispensable. Mrs. Campbell seldom left her husband. And when Ernest was not required in his father's room, his medical lore was great enough to render his services too valuable out of doors, in such an emergency, to allow of his spending much time with her. Julia's fever never rose to a great height, and she was the most reasonable and unexacting of patients. Still she did require a certain amount of attendance, more indeed than Anne

and Janet could give, occupied as they were with poor Mary.

Those hours of solitude were passed sadly, but not unprofitably by poor Hope. Many was the dreary journey back into the past she felt herself constrained to make. Clear was the insight she obtained into the errors with which that past was so thickly strewn.

The first points on which her mind rested were naturally her last-committed faults ;—her selfishness and folly during her father's illness. To be compelled now to be inactive on her bed, while others were overladen with work, was, she felt, a just punishment for those faults. That she should be debarred from the privilege of waiting on her father, was, she acknowledged, just, when she had so abused that privilege while it was accorded to her.

And she endeavoured to accept this punishment in a humble and patient spirit. No longer striving to exaggerate its severity, never forgetting that others were involved in it, she tried to accept with gratitude the alleviations afforded her, and to feel more deeply for the additional annoyance and fatigue her wilfulness had thrown upon others, than for the pain it had brought upon herself.

In the same chastened spirit, she looked back upon those sins against her father which had lately been so much upon her mind. The exaggerated remorse she had indulged in, had now given place to a more reasonable, profitable, and not less sincere self-condemnation. She went back to that first day of their meeting at

Denham Park. With bitter tears she recalled her indifference to his feelings. Absorbed in self, in selfish visions, and selfish regrets, she had been wholly blind to his sorrow and pity for herself,—to his feelings of embarrassment at his own position towards her. Numerous were the little instances she could recall, when she had received with cold indifference his attempts to comfort her, when she had repelled with a grave silence his efforts at conversation. Her own situation, her own feelings, her own credit, had so completely filled up her mind, that she had really never given a thought to him, except in so far as his opinion of herself was valuable to fill up the measure of admiration and respect she expected her conduct to procure for her.

And then, since her arrival at home, how many sins of this kind had she to mourn over—sins against him, against all! How little account had she made of all her mother's watchful tenderness towards her! How little gratitude had she felt for it! How poorly had she appreciated a character which now shone out before her in all the beauty of its truthfulness, its unselfishness, and deep warm love! How coldly had she looked upon Anne—that Anne whose visits to her bedside were now as sunshine in a shady place—that Anne whose goodness towards herself had been so untiring, so delicate and wise! How often, in this very room, on that very bed, had she given way to passionate bursts of sorrow over the fancied loneliness of her situation—over the unhappiness of her supposed superiority to all around her, at the very time when such treasures of

love and goodness were spread out for her acceptance—when nearly every one with whom she had connexion, were showing themselves immeasurably above herself in the best qualities of head and heart! Nearly every one! Hope began by degrees to annul the adverb. By degrees she began to admit into the number of her superiors, Julia, whom she had made the exception. As she heard her weak voice in the next room, always so quietly contented and cheerful—as she heard her so often press Anne to “go and sit with poor Hope, who must be so lonely,” and assure her that she wanted nothing, but was quite happy—as she heard all this, she saw herself forced to acknowledge that even Julia was more unselfish, more considerate than she was.

But the most painful part of Hope’s recollections was yet to come. It was painful to see and acknowledge so many faults, while she had thought herself so perfect: but still more painful was it to be forced to see a root of bitterness tainting and deforming even what seemed to be her excellencies.

Could it be true that even in striving to do well, self had been her only governing motive? That was a bitter thought indeed. She recalled that other sick-bed scene through which she had passed with such fair credit and renown. Could it be that all her wise and unselfish compliance with her friend’s wishes then, had been only the fruit of desire to come up to Mrs. Markham’s idea of a good nurse? Perhaps not altogether so. Hope was not now bent upon exaggerating her self-reproach, and with a kind of humble gratitude, she accepted the

soothing remembrance that she had at that time been filled with a sincere desire to soothe the sorrow, to allay the anxiety her loving friend felt on her account. But even at the best, self had had far too much to do in influencing her whole conduct. And as she gained courage to look deeper and deeper into the matter, it seemed to her that scarcely one action of her life, scarcely one feeling of her heart had ever been free from this terrible, all-pervading spot.

Had she then been like poor Walter, a self-worshipper? How eloquently had she declaimed against the meanness of such worship! and had she been all the time indulging in it? Had self been her god? Had selfishness been her one rule of action, both towards God and towards man? The oftener she asked herself the question, the more decided seemed the affirmative to grow.

A very solemnizing event occurred in the family to deepen the impression she was beginning to entertain of her own deficiency in this thing. On the very day on which Dr. Campbell was pronounced out of danger, poor Mary their servant died.

Anne came to tell Hope about it. Hope was much moved. It seemed so sad when they were rejoicing over their deliverance, that another family should be thrown into sorrow for the loss of one of its dear ones. It was a sign of her softened state of feeling that in all her own joy she was able to realize the grief of Mary's widowed mother and invalid sister. She asked Anne if Mary had been aware that death was near.

"Yes," Anne said ; "I wished to tell you about that, dear Hope ; I thought you might like to hear. We knew that poor Mary had been long a serious thoughtful Christian. She has been with us for ten years, and through all that time no one has ever seen a blot upon her consistent profession. A humble, earnest believer we knew her to be, so that even when it seemed likely that she might die in her delirium, we were not anxious about her. But since last night she has been sensible. And, just before she died, she turned to me, and laying her feeble hand on my arm, she said in a clear, happy voice, 'Miss Anne, my dear, what a blessing to know that all things are naked and open unto the eyes of my Saviour ; what a comfort to feel that the Lord my salvation is the Lord who searcheth the heart ! He has taken the whole charge of my soul, and He knows it all, even unto the deepest, darkest corner. That is my comfort.' "

Anne said no more. She was soon called to leave the room, and Hope was left alone to think over what had passed. It had filled her with uneasiness. To rejoice that the Lord searcheth the hearts ! Ah, how differently did she feel ! How gladly would she, if she could, hide the blackness, the coldness of her heart, from His eye ! And yet, that He did search the heart, was a great and solemn truth. And Hope tossed upon her bed in a kind of agony at the thought, that even then His holy eye was upon her heart. There was no longer in her mind any doubt as to the self-worship of that heart. Thus forced to realize the Lord's looking upon

it, she saw all its deformity as she had never seen it before.

She had turned away her face from the light, and was so deeply absorbed in her own thoughts, that she had not heard any one come in, when, in her restless movements, she turned round, and saw Anne standing at her bedside, looking on her with a face full of pity and anxiety.

Hope looked up for a minute into that quiet plain face she had once so despised, that face so full of honesty and goodness. Then with a sudden impulse she put her arms round her neck, and drawing down her head, kissed her repeatedly, with a kind of passionate earnestness.

"Are you ill, dear Hope? Are you in pain?" Anne asked tenderly.

Hope drew her face still closer to her own to hide the burning blushes which covered her cheeks, while she whispered in broken trembling tones the cause of her emotion, while she told that Mary's comfort was her deep sorrow, that the Lord searching the heart was to her an object of dread, while she felt her heart so cold and dead, so devoid of all love to that Lord who had claimed its whole capacity of loving.

"Dear Hope," was all Anne said at first, as she returned her earnest kiss.

Then she sat down beside her, and holding her hand in hers, she opened a Bible which lay near, and read in her low tones those words, "The love of God, which is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which



is given to us." She paused a moment, and then said softly, "Shed abroad, dear Hope, not worked out by us. And shed abroad by the Holy Ghost which is *given* to us, not purchased by us. As in another place we are told, it is shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Abundantly, there shall be no lack. Through Jesus Christ,—He who searcheth the hearts, and knows our need, is to supply it all. Through Jesus Christ,—for His sake, and that is a ground of merit which can never fail."

Hope listened eagerly, thirstingly, as if for life, while Anne, in her emphatic way, read passage after passage to show that we are just nothing, that Christ is everything,—that we are lost, that in Him is our help,—that we are weak, that He is our strength,—dead, and He is our life.

Hope could no longer wonder that Anne had trusted so much to the simple reading of the Word to the benighted Walter,—now when she had been brought to see her own need of its light and life-giving power. As Anne read the words so slowly, with such deep feeling, such true emphasis, Hope felt that no comment, no words of man could have made them clearer, or more forcible. From that day all illusions as to her spiritual state were at once dispelled. On that day she first learned to know the extent and spirituality of God's law. And seeing that it reached even to the desires and intents of the heart, and that it claimed for the Lord entire supremacy over the whole man, she on that day first really felt herself a sinner, first felt her need of

a Saviour. And from that day learned, though with the trembling, faltering spirit of the self-seeker, still learned to put her soul into that Saviour's hands for justification and sanctification.

Now that her eyes were fully opened to her own condition, now that she had learnt to know herself as she was, to see the contrast between the weak and faulty reality, and the brilliant perfection of the being she had fancied herself to be, Hope believed that all difficulty was fairly over. She supposed that she could never fall back again into her old self-referring, self-engrossed habits. And that she did not fall back into the depths of such habits is true enough. But, poor girl, she had soon too much reason to know, that selfishness is not a vice which can be cured in a day. And, even years after this, many a sorrowful hour did she pass mourning over the self-consciousness which seemed to have taken inveterate root in her nature, to corrupt and obscure all the better feelings of her heart, and to mar even her most sincere attempts at self-improvement, or at usefulness. Through her whole life, she recalled with gratitude those sad and solitary hours spent in her sick-room ; and to the discipline of heart she had then passed through, she always ascribed the peace and happiness of both her outward and inward life. But when she had children of her own to educate, most earnest and unremitting was her watchfulness that everything which could in the least foster self-reference, self-consciousness, should be most strictly avoided. And often did she warn her friends, that, in her own words, to

turn a child's thoughts and feelings in upon its own heart, was the greatest injury that one could do it. Other faults might be eradicated, but self-seeking, self-consciousness often only gained new strength from the efforts made to overcome them.

Hope's illness had never been very serious, but the weakness it left behind was of long continuance. After Dr. Campbell was able to come down-stairs, and even to go out a little, she continued so weak that a short drive with him was enough to knock her up for the rest of the day, so that she could do nothing but lie still on the sofa to rest.

Weakness and langour are a severe trial at any time, much more so when one's mind is full, as hers was, of high resolves of future amendment, of schemes of active usefulness ;—and a severe trial she found it. She felt that it was hard to be reduced to complete inaction, at the very time when she was beginning to long for useful employment, and she was at first inclined to be impatient and discontented.

But she had abundance of good sense, when she chose to use it. She reflected, that if she could not help those around her, she could at least keep herself from adding to their troubles, and for their sakes she strove to be patient and cheerful. And inasmuch as patience and contentment are quiet, unobtrusive virtues, and less apt to excite notice or praise than the more active, stirring ones, it was, perhaps, a good thing, that they should be first called for, from Hope. They at least served to test the sincerity of her desire to be of use,

and showed her how much of it sprung from a wish for praise, how much from a regard to the happiness and comfort of others.

As soon as they were able for the journey, Dr. Campbell and Hope went to pay a visit to the Markhams. Dr. Campbell stayed for about a fortnight to recruit his strength with quietness, and freedom from all anxiety and labour. Hope remained more than a month longer, after which she was accompanied home by Lucy and Mrs. Markham. They paid a long enough visit to Seaborough to become thoroughly acquainted with all the inmates of Hope's present home, to be present at the joyful festival of Ernest's final return from Edinburgh, and to know and love that dear brother, the pride and joy of every heart in his family circle.

Hope felt that there was much of a saddening nature in her visit to the neighbourhood of her old home. She was only now beginning to love and to estimate her kind friend Mrs. Denham as she had deserved ; now, for the first time, learning to mourn for her loss as she ought to mourn. While she had been engrossed in her schemes and visions of self-honour and self-praise, she had almost forgotten her second mother, or had only recalled her image in order to magnify her own sorrows to a proper heroine pitch. But now that her feelings towards her were purified from much of the selfishness which had hitherto defiled them, she took a tender and mournful pleasure in visiting every place in any way associated with her, and in conversing about her with those who had known and loved her better than Hope's self-occu

pied heart had suffered her to do. And thus meditating on her, thus conversing about her, she felt as if she were suddenly lifted out of the present time, and taken back to the very day of her death. All the first freshness of her grief returned ; that grief whose softening influence she had wilfully cast away from her, in her efforts to attain and to preserve what she considered a true heroic calmness and composure.

In other respects her enjoyment of her visit was unmixed. Now that her mind was no longer full of her own excellencies, she could better see and love the excellencies of others ; and now, with “ a heart at leisure from itself,” she could observe and understand her old friends, the Markhams, as she had never before done, and could rejoice in the beauty and loveableness of their characters, which she had never before fully estimated.

They, on their side, were delighted with her. Dr. and Mrs. Markham were equally astonished and pleased with the improvement in her. Lucy, one of those characters who cling so tenaciously to all old feelings,—Lucy was almost unwilling to acknowledge even to herself how great that improvement was. Too much to admire the Hope of the present time, seemed a kind of treason against the friend of her young days ; but even she felt that there was more to love in the present than in the past Hope,—even she was forced to rejoice in the change. Hope was more silent than she used to be, but that silence proceeded from no cold indifference. She was more interested in things and people unconnected with

herself, than Lucy had ever seen her. But she was now as ready to listen as to speak ; and if Lucy had fewer bursts of eloquent declamation to admire, she had far more full and mutual discussion to enjoy.

But perhaps the person most sensible of, most rejoiced in Hope's improvement, was Ernest. The sister who met him on his return in August, seemed a different being from the one who had met him last October. On their first meeting he had been so determined to love her, that he had not allowed himself to see her faults at all clearly ; and only in the happiness he now felt in the change, did he learn to understand the great need there had been for such change.

He found her now so much more frank, so much more considerate and gentle, and above all, so much more happy. Yes, since her own happiness had ceased to be the first object of her life, that happiness had been immeasurably greater and more secure. And now that those around her had learned to be less painfully solicitous to order everything according to her pleasure, Hope was far more frequently pleased—now that no one feared to interrupt her occupations, or to call upon her for service or assistance, Hope had learned to enjoy such interruptions, to delight to render such service.

And now that Hope has learned to know herself, I do not intend to pursue her history further. I would only remark, that you must not suppose this self-knowledge was the work of a few days or even weeks. I have not chosen a good title for this my last chapter. During her illness the fruits of that self-knowledge first began to

appear, but the self-knowledge itself had been going on gradually for months. Hope felt this herself.

While at the Markhams', she happened to meet with the book "*Ida Greville*," the discussion upon which formed your introduction to my heroine. She first half smiled, and then sighed deeply, as she recalled her own eloquent description of what ought to have been *Ida's* conduct, and contrasted it with what had been her own under similar, nay, under far more favourable circumstances. She now understood well the significance of *Mrs. Markham's* question about the second title of the book, and she went back in thought over the events of the last few months, tracing to its source the progress of the self-knowledge she felt she had gained. The first step, though a small one, always seemed to her to have been taken on that day of her arrival at home, taken under the somewhat unpleasant guidance of *Hannah's* blunt remarks upon the difference between her and her mother. This, and other similar steps, had often been apparently lost again, but Hope saw that they had never been wholly fruitless, and *Hannah*, *Nurse Rebecca*, *Lady Harcourt*, *Mrs. Maitland*, and even the *Misses Morrison*, all came in for their share of gratitude for the good they had directly or indirectly done her.

One word before I close. Perhaps some of my young readers may think me a little inconsistent, may think that the self-knowledge recommended in my title cannot be gained without the self-study condemned in the whole scope of the book ; but they are mistaken. The self-study I wish to depict is as opposed as possible to true

self-knowledge, consisting as it does in drawing imaginary pictures of one's own character, painting the excellencies in the brightest colours, throwing the defects into the deepest shade, and then twisting and contorting the most common events and circumstances, so as to suit the dignity and importance of this imaginary hero or heroine.

The safest, the most useful kind of self-knowledge is gained in action. You can easily persuade yourself that you feel kindly and charitably towards your neighbour, when you set yourself to excite and work up such kindly and charitable feelings ; but the surest test of their sincerity is, after all, when you find that you have been kind to that neighbour when he or she required kindness at your hands,—that you have made excuses, or had patience with his or her faults, when these faults have been personally offensive, or injurious to yourself.

Be as strict and as close as you please in examining into what you have felt or done, but do not waste your time in vain speculations upon what you fancy you can or will do, and then call your own fancies self-knowledge.





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